

TOP STORY: *Vaclav Havel on keeping hope alive*

February 22 - March 7, 1993

In THESE TIMES

the alternative newsmagazine

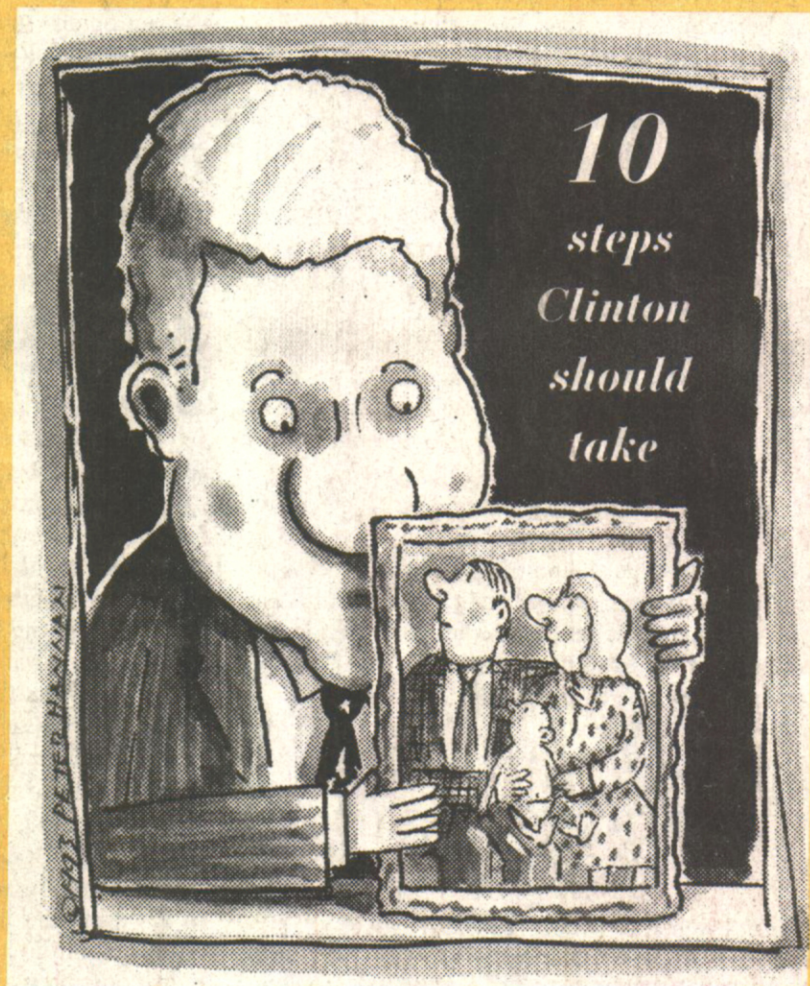
*“Who
wants to
ride a
through
train if it’s
a through
train to
hell?”*

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FAMILIES VALUED



David Moberg reports

EDITORIAL

A GOOD FIRST STEP DESERVES ANOTHER

We're not out of the woods yet. The returns from our appeal for funds two weeks ago have been heartening, but it only begins to meet our needs. The rapid response of a small number of friends has brought in some \$30,000 as of this writing. Now we need three times this amount to pay off our most pressing debts and for postage for our February direct-mail package.

Increased circulation is the key to our long-term survival. Without 10,000-15,000 new subscribers we will never escape our periodic crises. Last September's direct-mail effort garnered us 4,500 new subscribers and was our most successful mail effort since 1989. We expect that the February mailing will bring in another 5,000 paid subscriptions. And we've scheduled similar mailings for May and September.

These efforts cost about \$70,000 apiece, some \$25,000 of which is for postage that must be paid up front. That's a lot of money, but we get some of it back right away and most of the rest in renewals in the course of a year. The problem is that we're so burdened with back debt that we can't save up the postage money, which for several years has meant that we were able to mail only once or twice a year, instead of the three efforts we planned. And that barely sufficed to keep our circulation from dropping.

This year we hope to break that pattern and begin growing again. We believe that the times and our new format will help, but we need your help now to get this process off the ground. So send us a check today, if you can. And whether you can donate or not, please get your friends and associates to subscribe. Mail to: In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S EXQUISITE SENSITIVITY

We have always viewed Bill Clinton as a man with some progressive social attitudes but few clear or strongly held principles, as a man of great political stamina but slight courage of conviction. Events of the first few weeks of his

administration support this view. After repeatedly promising to tax the wealthy and spare the so-called middle class, Clinton's treasury secretary proposed a regressive energy tax and Clinton floated a proposal for cuts in Social Security.

After campaigning on jobs, jobs, jobs, Clinton has offered paltry ideas about job creation, claiming there is no money—even though he is proposing a truly minuscule cut of \$14 billion in armaments spending. After talking about the need for universal health care, the White House started hinting that cost control would come first, leaving millions still uncovered. And the administration apparently prefers a managed competition plan that will save nothing but the insurance companies.

On the other hand, on social issues like abortion, gay civil rights and family leave, Clinton has moved quickly, if not decisively, to reverse the policies of the Reagan-Bush years. And on trade union rights he has made a couple of token gestures toward the unions, most notably by reversing the ban on air-traffic controllers fired by Reagan.

Clinton's extreme sensitivity to public pressure is striking. It was most apparent in his failure to discipline his secretary of defense and his military subordinates when they led the charge against allowing gays to serve in the military, in his quick reversal on cutting Social Security in the face of strong opposition from the American Association of Retired People and in his pathetic flight from prospective attorney general Kimba Wood.

The lesson for the left should be clear: the insider game is hopeless. Unions like the UAW and AFSCME, who were strongly committed to a single-payer health plan but are now silent in the hope of gaining the good graces of the administration, will get only crumbs. On the core issues facing the country, Clinton's corporate sponsors have the inside track. Absent a visibly active movement on issues like health care, military spending, the North American Free Trade Agreement, foreign arms sales, job programs, they will win.

But there's one cause for hope: Clinton is highly political. Like Franklin Roosevelt, who was elected in 1932 on a conservative promise to balance the budget but swerved sharply to the left under pressure of the newly emerging industrial unions, Clinton can be moved. But he won't budge until public opinion is mobilized by those now on the margins of the administration.

*The wrong
people have the
inside track, but
Clinton can be
moved by
popular criticism
and organized
pressure.*

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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InTHESETIMES

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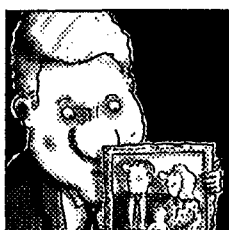


Lost in transition

*A funny thing happened to industrial policy
 on the way to the White House.*

JOHN B. JUDIS

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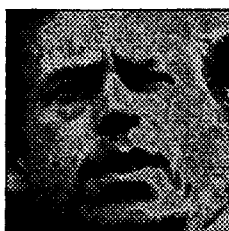


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LETTERS

Counterforce needed

Your editorial titled "The doors are opening, but what's inside?" (*ITT*, Jan. 11) could not have expressed my fears more clearly.

Of course, I voted for Clinton (or, against Bush), but I did it with the deepest of reservations. His stands on the most vital issues were ambiguous at best. As you point out, his unclear pre-election stance on health care and post-election adoption of the "managed competition" philosophy will leave low-income people in the clutches of the insurance companies. And what is one of the largest health care carriers? Aetna! He nominated a vice president of that social and economic vampire to be attorney general, and a strong supporter of the S&Ls is now

secretary of the treasury.

As a life-long worker, I realize that adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) would force the living standards of the working and middle classes down to the lowest international common denominator. Clinton says he will oppose it until certain amendments guaranteeing the protection of the worker and the environment are in place. Either Clinton is not knowledgeable or he is lying. NAFTA will be debated, in Congress, under the umbrella of the "fast-track" principle—90 days to debate it and a vote up or down with no amendments.

My fear is that, with Bush out and Clinton in, the electorate will sit back and wait for an automatic change in course for the ship of state. Au contraire! Clinton has already put out the

signals that he is not sensitive to the labor vote, the senior citizen vote, the vote of Joe Average.

Recent history has proven that citizen involvement in the stewardship of our beloved country is practically nil after elections. This is precisely what got us in the difficulties we now find ourselves. Without citizen involvement, we are going to fall further into the soup. As Jim Hightower so succinctly puts it, "You can't clean up the water till you get the hogs out of the creek."

All is not lost, but with the tremendous power generated by the corporations in Washington, our only counter is some good old-fashioned, grass-roots political pressure.

Dick Moork
Seattle

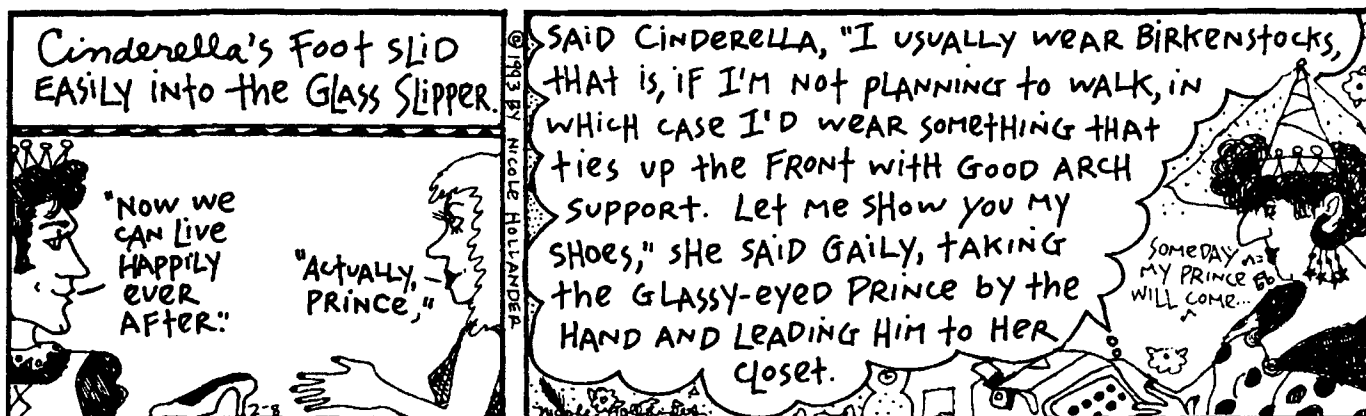
Downward revision

John Judis gave Bruce Babbitt a five-star rating (*ITT*, Jan. 11) because of his brilliant navigation of water-rights disputes as Arizona governor. In order to keep Central Arizona Project (CAP) money flowing from Congress after the Carter "hit list" threat, Babbitt favored groundwater preservation over flowing rivers; not exactly the vision of Maya Angelou, Chief Seattle or Norman Maclean. Despite billions in federal subsidies to this "Cadillac Desert," the farmers of central Arizona still can't afford the water.

Three recent books, *Last Oasis*:

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



Facing Water Scarcity by Sandra Postel, *The Dammed* by Fred Pearce and *Wasting the Rain* by W.M. Adams all emphasize water conservation as vital. To which, I believe, Babbitt would agree. All three also agree, however, that giant water projects such as CAP are not the long-term answer to water insufficiency.

Babbitt hasn't been enthusiastic about other environmental struggles in which I've been involved, either. I asked him to sign the Nuclear Safety Initiative in 1975; he refused. Perhaps he had good reason since he was Arizona attorney general at the time. About four days before the election of 1982 but well after the issue had been decided in public opinion, Gov. Babbitt did endorse the returnable/deposit beverage container initiative; it lost.

Perhaps Babbitt deserves three or four stars. He is a big improvement over the last 12 years.

Hattie Babbitt, Bruce's wife and the designated emissary to the Organization of American States, has spoken forcefully in favor of the embargo of Cuba, while not speaking out against the U.S.-sponsored terror of death squad governments in Guatemala and El Salvador. I don't know whether this is an improvement or not.

Roland James
Phoenix

Doctors' pay

For those with the audacity to complain about medical charges, doctors' favorite riposte is to compare themselves with movie stars and sports figures, then ask, "Do they save lives?" But if we are to indulge in comparisons, what about teachers? I know an exceptional one who spent an entire career giving five-year-olds love, fostering self-esteem, teaching good work habits and respect for others. I am quite sure the things this person instilled in hundreds of students may indeed have saved lives in ways other than surgery.

Margaret F. DeChant
Miami

Tunnel vision

In his essay, "In education, there's choice, and then there's choice" (*ITT*, Jan 25), Allen Graubard argues that "whether schools are 'good' or 'bad' is worth discussing with some complexity." Rather than so doing, however, he creates a straw man through repeated references to, and fundamental misrepresentations of, Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* and my essay, "Economic development is killing education" (*ITT*, Dec. 28). Graubard suggests these two pieces argue that "without radically changing funding systems and racially integrating urban schools, nothing can really be done and schools will remain failures." Such a position may well be a "prescription for irrelevance," as he contends, but it is not a position taken in either piece.

Nothing in the article, or Kozol's book, contradicts the importance of such internal school practices as tracking, rigid bureaucracies, climate of schools (e.g., teacher and student expectations), the curriculum, social organization and other cultural and structural characteristics of schooling institutions in shaping the experiences and outcomes for students. Graubard fails to even mention some of these considerations and, in fact, basically lists some examples of good schools to support his position that schooling differences count. There is no discussion, complex or otherwise, about these issues.

In my essay, the main subject is the impact of economic development policy on education. Graubard is simply wrong in stating "urban, underfunded and minority-dominated school systems ... are the main subject of Gregory Squires' article." We may wish that schools were sanctuaries unaffected by the broader political and economic context in which schools operate. But, as I am sure Graubard understands, they are not. An important piece of that broader context is the array of subsidies, tax breaks and other incentives often provided in the name of economic development.

Gregory D. Squires
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

What if?

We don't need a strategic defense, you write, because "no country on Earth could now attack us and survive the retaliation of which we are already capable" (Editorial, Jan. 25).

I wish I could share your faith in deterrence. But I keep thinking of a possible situation that might be summed up as: "Hitler in the bunker with nuclear weapons." (What has he got to lose?) What happens when a nuclear-armed government is violently overthrown: do we retaliate against the successor regime?

Or, what if, after hitting New York, an attacker threatens to wipe out Washington and Los Angeles as well if we retaliate?

In the absence of a strategic defense, obtaining nuclear weapons is an overwhelming temptation for even small and poor governments. With just a few nuclear missiles they can become, in a sense, the equal of the greatest superpower.

Taras Wolansky
Jersey City, N.J.

Editor's note: Intercontinental ballistic missiles don't grow on trees. They cannot be developed secretly. The point is to negotiate a non-proliferation agreement under which all countries reduce nuclear stocks and cease missile development, under U.N. supervision. This is certainly a safer path, and one that would allow technology to be used for the benefit of people.

Correction

Part of the final line of David Futrelle's review in our last issue, "The education business," was inadvertently dropped. The line should have read: "Real change in the educational system has to come from the grass roots: that's lesson No. 1." We regret the error.

InSHORT



UNCLE SAM'S BLIND EYE

New evidence shows biased human rights reports on Haiti

reneged on promises to overturn a Bush executive order that mandated refugees be returned to Haiti without asylum hearings.

Through 1992, State Department and Immigration and Naturalization

An *In These Times* investigation shows that the Bush administration consistently used incompetent and biased field reporting to justify its closed-door policy toward Haitian refugees. This is especially significant now that President Clinton has



By Woody Igou

Sorry, we're closed

The Supreme Court held that a state prisoner facing



execution is not entitled to have a claim of innocence reviewed in

federal court. Justice Rehnquist noted that once a defendant has had a fair trial "the presumption of innocence disappears." *Actually, full decomposition can take up to five years.*

Transhistorical slander

Romanian Princess Alexandra Basarab, a descendant of the historical Dracula, has attacked Francis Ford Coppola's recent movie as "insulting." She is outraged that the movie depicts her relative



(known as Vlad the Impaler) as a monster. She blames

Coppola for using "some elements of fantasy" and made plans to take the case to court.

See you in Night Court.

Look, I can see your house

The Earthwinds Project, a highly complex and expensive attempt to become the

first adventurers to circle the earth in a lighter-than-air balloon, was spectacularly short-



lived. It crashed on a mountain peak within five minutes of launch. The

planners forgot to note that the lifting power of the craft was severely reduced when launched under extremely cold conditions.

That old sneak visits, physics.

Abattoir uh-oh

After admitting that approximately 28,000 pounds of tainted meat "slipped" past federal inspectors, causing at



least two deaths in Washington state, federal officials tried to

reassure the public by noting that 7,400 inspectors examine the carcasses of 120,000,000 animals a year and that very little contaminated meat gets through. Inspections are limited to visual inspections, rather than any analysis of samples.

After doing the math, that comes to one carcass every three and a half minutes. Boy, I feel better already.

Stunned by a stupid statement? Nauseated by a noxious news item? Livid about a ludicrous lie? Contact the Appall-O-Meter, In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malicious cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. It is, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

Service (INS) reports on human rights conditions in Haiti were slanted for political ends, according to court documents and sources close to the situation. The reports were designed to portray those fleeing the country as economic migrants, not political refugees—and, by extension, to discredit democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, ousted in a September 1991 military coup.

Before Bush issued his May 27, 1992, executive order mandating summary repatriation, Haitian refugees were taken to the U.S. Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba for an initial asylum screening. Those who showed a "credible fear" of political persecution were "screened in" to Miami for a full-blown asylum hearing with representation by an attorney. Others were "screened out" and repatriated to Haiti. In December 1991 and January 1992, INS asylum officers were "screening in" more than 80 percent of the refugees.

Affidavits from two INS translators filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in the Haitian Centers case claim that "pressure from Washington" forced the screening-in rate down. A series of visits to Guantanamo from senior INS and State Department officials in January 1992 "sent a clear message" that Washington was unhappy with the screen-in rate, according to a former asylum officer who spoke to *In These Times* on condition of anonymity. "No one ever said 'lower the screen-in rate,' but it was clear from the way they kept questioning us about decisions to screen in that they were unhappy with the rate."

The screen-in rate dropped to between 30 and 40 percent by the end of January 1992, still embarrassingly high for the administration. Enter Gunther Otto Wagner, senior intelligence officer at the INS' Southern Regional Immigration Office in Dallas, Texas.

In late February of last year, the INS dispatched Wagner to Haiti to investigate reports of targeted persecution against refugees returned by the United States. Over the space of three months, Wagner and a group of State Department officers interviewed roughly 3,000 repatriated Haitian refugees. According to Wagner's deposition, he conducted 600 of those interviews himself during the course of three trips to Haiti. Amazingly, Wagner and his colleagues did not find a single "credible" case of post-repatriation reprisal by the military. A joint Americas Watch/National Coalition for Haitian Refugees report described this effort as "a wholly slanted undertaking."

Wagner's investigative method, his deposition shows, was farcical. It consisted of checking in with the local military commander and proceeding to a public gathering place. There, Wagner would loudly announce his own identity and ask if anyone knew of any repatriates, particularly any who might have suffered reprisals. People who did come forward were interviewed in public.

Even under these conditions, 2 to 3 percent of the people Wagner interviewed reported that they were in hiding or felt threatened. But Wagner dismissed their fears. His logic: A person with a credible fear of prosecution "would not have been in my presence. Because the individual is out in the street, as far as I am concerned, he is not hiding."

According to his own sworn statement, Wagner had never read asylum law or regulations, was not trained to adjudicate asylum claims and had no training in cross-cultural interviewing techniques. Furthermore, he had never been to Haiti before, had not read State Department reports on Haiti and could neither identify Haitian political parties nor accurately recall Aristide's popular nickname.

He *should* have been able to identify victims of repression, having spent a

decade and a half helping two dictatorships target them. Wagner was recruited out of the German Air Force into the U.S. Army's security police in Occupied Germany, and in 1955 emigrated to the United States. In 1966, he went to Vietnam as senior public safety adviser under the Office of Public Safety (OPS) of the State Department's Agency for International Development (AID), a front for CIA operations. The OPS trained the Vietnamese national police, who participated in U.S.-sponsored operations that summarily arrested, tortured, "disappeared" and murdered tens of thousands of Vietnamese civilians. Wagner moved on to Managua, Nicaragua, in 1971 as senior public safety adviser to the Somoza dictatorship, staying on as a consultant when President Carter abolished the OPS in 1977.

In the aftermath of Wagner's trip to Haiti, the screen-in rate dropped below 10 percent for the first two weeks in April. But Wagner's reports met increasing skepticism from INS officials, according to several sources. The rate had recovered to 30 to 40 percent before Bush stopped the screening process entirely by ordering summary repatriations.

Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson, a Bush appointee, will continue to run the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs for the foreseeable future, because right-wing Cuban-Americans shot down Clinton's proposed nominee as too soft on Fidel Castro. And in the wake of Zoë Baird's failed nomination as attorney general, the INS, which is part of the Justice Department, probably won't have a new commissioner for some time, either. If Clinton wants accurate information about Haiti, he might want to read reports from Americas Watch, Amnesty International and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights instead of relying on biased information from his own bureaucracy.

—John Canham-Clyne

THE WRONG MEDICINE

Managed care won't cure what ails the health system

When President Clinton's health reform task force was first set up, it was supposed to come up with a final plan that Clinton could propose immediately after taking office. But the best the task force was able to do was present the pres-

ident with a series of policy options. The problem was cost. Given Clinton's preference for a system of managed competition—which would leave the private insurance industry largely intact—his task force couldn't come up with a way of significantly reducing total health care costs.

Robert Reischauer, director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), recently cast further doubt upon managed competition's ability to reduce costs. Testifying before a House subcommittee, Reischauer—whose agency supplies lawmakers with budget data and analysis—warned that the current House proposal for managed competition, sponsored by Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN), would not produce any savings. "After initially rising above baseline levels for a few years, this proposal would leave national health care expenditures at approximately the same level that they would have reached otherwise," Reischauer said.

By contrast, Reischauer thought that costs could be more easily controlled in a single-payer system such as Canada's. Reischauer estimated that a single-payer system could have saved \$30 to \$35 billion in administrative costs during 1991. The CBO director's positive assessment of the single-payer system

MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

And I'm Eliot Ness

Now that *The Untouchables* has become a TV series, its production company Paramount is busy convincing worrywarts that the show's aggression level is high-quality. The racial slurs, for instance, will be authentic. "You'll hear people referring to people in the shows as 'micks' and 'dagos,' which was just common language," said Kerry McCluggage, chairman of Paramount Television Group to *Broadcasting* magazine. And exposing Chicago's history of "lawlessness," says McCluggage, may let people see "the relevance of what happened there to what's going on in some of our cities today."

Junk-food Journalism

Can you remember which word Dan Quayle couldn't spell? Do you think you should? Can you recall which child Woody Allen is alleged to have abused—and wish you didn't? Did you follow Johnny Carson's retirement, whether you wanted to or not? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are a victim of junk-food news, according to the Organization of News Ombudsmen and Carl Jensen, a professor at Sonoma State University. (Jensen also originated the Project Censored awards, for most underreported stories.) Other "winners":

Madonna and Sex; Fergie and Diana; the Elvis Stamp. Jensen notes that media time spent on Dan Quayle and his ilk could have gone toward election-season substance.

Hell-raiser radio

For everybody who's sick and tired of Rush Limbaugh talk radio, here comes Jim Hightower. The former agricultural commissioner of Texas and outspoken populist has developed a commercial radio program (with advertisers like Ben & Jerry's and Working Assets) modeled on the format Paul Harvey perfected. Hightower ridicules the North American Free Trade Agreement ("going from Tweedledumb to Tweedledumber"), celebrates citizen activism ("after all, an agitator's the center-post in the washing machine that gets the dirt out") and bemoans "trichotillomania," or the uncontrollable desire to tear your hair out at corporate greed. Enthusiasts should encourage the local station to carry *Hightower Radio* (212-245-0510).

Quote of the week

In *Electronic Media* magazine, retired talk show host Merv Griffin explains why he doesn't want to host one today: "Andy Warhol once said on my show that everybody would be famous for 15 minutes, but he didn't say they would have to cry."

© 1993 Pat Aufderheide

echoes that of the General Accounting Office—the investigative arm of Congress—which estimated that, even including universal coverage, a Canadian system could immediately save the U.S. \$3 billion in annual costs.

—John B. Judis

APPLYING PRESSURE

Health care coalition plans actions nationwide

Supporters of a Canadian-style health care system are planning a demonstration outside the White House this month to pressure the Clinton administration for a single-payer program. The February 24 rally in Washington is one of

dozens of actions around the country being organized by the United Health Care Action Network (UHCAN), a nationwide coalition of health care advocates.

UHCAN delegates from 13 states met in Cleveland in late January to plan activities for the next three months. Anticipating that the Clinton administration will not have a health reform proposal to present to Congress before May, UHCAN leaders decided to concentrate on education and lobbying in support of the Conyers-McDermott-Wellstone single-payer bill, now before the House and Senate.

After the Washington demonstration—organized by the White Lung Association, the Gray Panthers and Physicians for a National Health Plan—UHCAN plans a series of local "day of reckoning" meetings during the congressional recess of March 19-22. Lawmakers will be confronted by constituents in their own districts and asked to support a single-payer plan.

In addition, California-based Neighbor-to-Neighbor, a UHCAN affiliate, is conducting a study of how insurance industry PAC money affects lawmakers' stands on health care reform. And, finally, after Clinton's plan is presented to Congress, UHCAN plans to organize a phone-in campaign to Capitol Hill in support of the Conyers-McDermott-Wellstone bill.

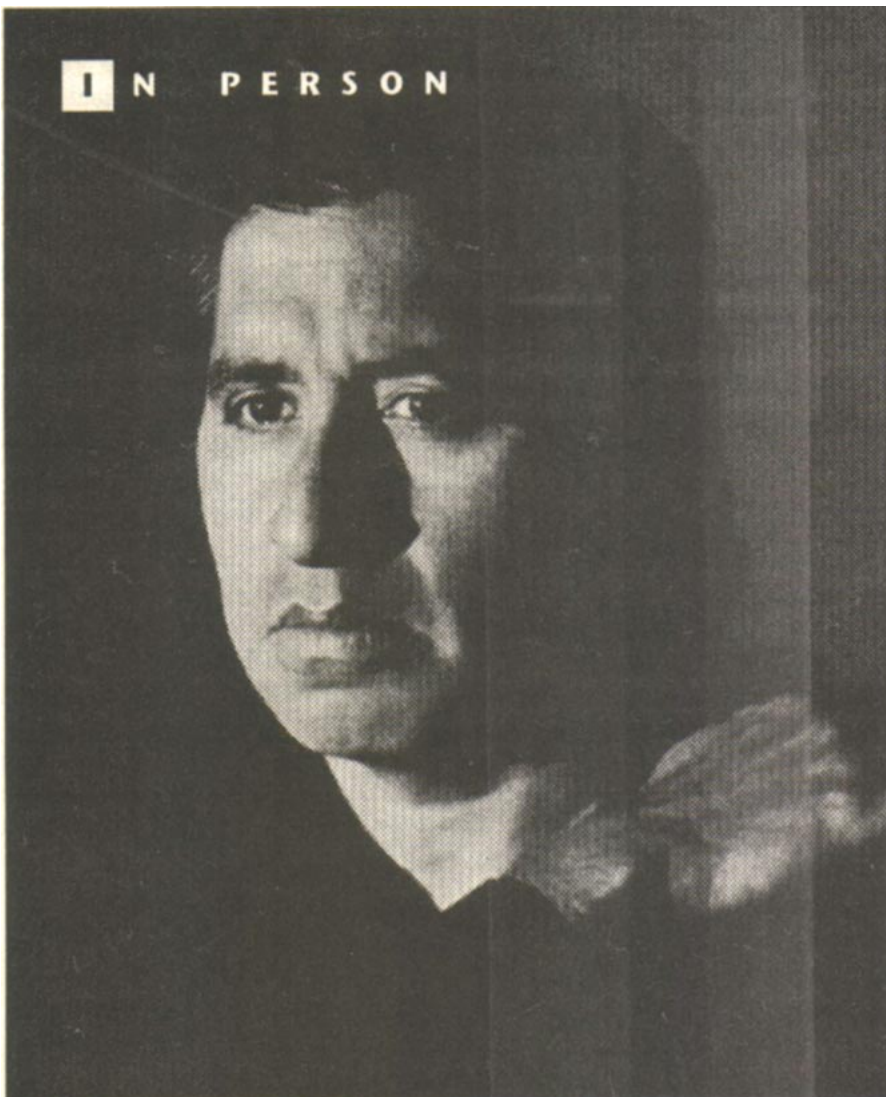
Some lawmakers are already starting to feel the pressure. In Chicago last month, some 400 angry constituents—more than double the expected number—showed up for a scheduled meeting with Democratic Rep. William Lipinski. Due to redistricting, Lipinski was pitted against longtime single-payer advocate Rep. Marty Russo in the 1992 primary. To offset Russo's strong record on the issue, Lipinski had claimed to be a leading congressional proponent of a Canadian-style system. After defeating Russo, however, Lipinski quickly waffled, joining Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN) as co-sponsor of a managed competition bill.

Managed competition "would be a disaster for millions of middle-class Americans," noted Joe Ramski, chair of the Chicago Senior Senate and the St. Bruno Parish Senior Club. This sentiment was echoed by dozens of speakers during the two-hour meeting, organized by the Illinois State Council of Senior Citizens with the help of Illinois Public Action. But Lipinski was not there to hear it. He had bowed out of the event at the last minute, citing an "emergency" meeting in Washington. Nonetheless, his aides got the message. They promised their boss would drop his support of the Cooper bill.

For information on these activities, call UHCAN in Cleveland at (216) 566-8100, or Georgians for a Commonsense Health Care in Atlanta at (404) 292-1219.

—James Weinstein

I N P E R S O N



Brit Thuston

ALONE BUT NOT ALOOF

Richard Rodriguez' assimilation

Service in San Francisco, believes bilingual education is wrong simply because it encourages minorities, primarily Hispanics, to remain loyal to their native tongue. What they need, he argues, is an entrance to the melting pot, not an attachment to the past. English is the only door.

I am tempted to compare him to James Baldwin. The two have a lot in common: their homosexuality, a deeply felt voyage from the periphery of culture to center stage, a strong religiosity and a sense of sacredness. Their political stands, however, are remarkably different. Born in a white neighborhood in Sacramento in 1947, Rodriguez published at age 35 his first book, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*. Already a minor classic, it is an explosive autobiography detailing his humble beginnings and how he was raised with expectations that led to graduate school at the University of California at Berkeley and a dissertation on John Milton researched at the British Museum.

As a child, Rodriguez was sent to Catholic school where rigid Irish nuns over-

Richard Rodriguez, arguably the most visible and controversial Chicano intellectual, has become an ideological lightning rod. This highly stylized essayist, a regular on public television and an editor of *Pacific News*

ETC.

By Miles Harvey

Read the fine print

The Health Insurance Association of America is running an ad that claims what Americans really want, deep down inside, is for the insurance industry to go on running the health care business. The ad cites an industry-sponsored poll that found 92 percent of Americans agree with the statement, "Health insurance companies should play a key role in controlling health care cost." Yeah, but who could disagree? Of course the industry *should* contain costs. So should the doctors. So should the hospitals. The trouble is that they *don't*.

Lady luck?

Women beware: you're being taken for a ride. In an upcoming book, consumer guru Ralph Nader demonstrates how you are being ripped off solely on the basis of your gender—and in ways you may not suspect. If you purchased a new car in Chicago recently, you most likely paid at least \$140 more than a white man purchasing the same car; if you are a black female, you might have paid up to triple the markup paid by a white man. And if you live in New York City, chances are that your local dry cleaner is charging you at least 50 cents more than a man to launder a white cotton shirt. *Why Women Pay More* not only gives you the jaw-clenching facts, but also offers practical tips on how to avoid such scenarios. To order,

and a \$10 check or money order to *Why Women Pay More*; P.O. Box 19367; Washington, D.C., 20036.

Eight days a week In the region where early Spanish explorers searched in vain for the fountain of youth, Dade County, Fla., lawyers have discovered the next-best thing. County auditors recently found that court-appointed lawyers have been billing taxpayers for more than 24 hours of work in a single day. The record for what *American Lawyer* describes as "seemingly impossible dedication" was a 39.25-hour workday. And that feat was nothing compared to those of Arthur Carter Jr., an 18-year veteran of the Miami criminal bar. As *American Lawyer* explains, "During one remarkable stretch in late 1988 that lasted for 116 consecutive days, Carter billed the county for 14 hours a day or more—week-ends included. At least six times, Carter managed to bill for more than 24 hours in a single day. On August 19, 1988, he claimed to have put in 37.5 hours; the next day, a Saturday, he counted his workday at 28 hours." The Florida state attorney's office launched a probe into such abuses last spring, but the office won't comment on whether Carter is involved. Just in case, Carter should probably get himself a lawyer—and if he can't afford one, the court could always appoint one for him. But that probably won't be necessary. From fiscal year 1987-88 through fiscal year 1990-91, Carter took in \$550,000 in fees from court appointments.

saw his assimilation. His parents were first-generation Mexicans, thoroughly traditional in their religious beliefs, who spoke only Spanish at home. As a result, he felt misunderstood, isolated in a time and space where Hispanics were unpleasant ghosts. Rodriguez is vehement: requiring the instruction of languages other than English in the classroom is dangerous. It creates an abyss—a sense of separateness between the student and mainstream culture. He calls his mother tongue "a private vehicle of communication" and the adopted one (what Henry James referred to as "the wife tongue") a public language. And he wishes this linguistic division of selves did not consume his spirit.

Comprised of five separate essays, *Hunger of Memory* was an engaging analysis of the writer's journey from silence to voice, from anonymity to celebrity, from South to North. In his book, Rodriguez issued a vociferous attack against minority quotas. Before Linda Chavez and other right-wing commentators, he attacked liberals for rejoicing in the promotion of blacks and Hispanics as victims, for allowing their guilt to shape affirmative-action programs. Even if he himself was a "scholarship boy," thanks to the color of his skin and his idiosyncratic last name, he thinks it is a mistake to pay special attention to an individual based on his ethnic background.

Today, 10 years after these views were first articulated, Rodriguez is plagued by doubt. He understands that in his odyssey from adolescence to adulthood to maturity something essential was lost in translation. His second book, *Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father*, published in 1992, is also a collection of essays, albeit one without thematic unity. As Rodriguez deals with topics like AIDS, barbarism vs. civilization, Catholicism and his homosexuality, it is apparent that a sense of nostalgia has taken control of him. Disappointed by America, the inner truths of Mexican culture are a magnet Rodriguez finds difficult to resist.

The most persuasive and metaphorical essay in Rodriguez' second volume, "The Head of Joaquín Murrieta," centers on the legend of a 19th-century Mexican-born *bandido* in Fresno County. Murrieta was an outlaw, a Robin Hood figure who fought the Anglo establishment, giving money and happiness to the poor and dispossessed, and whose death has been turned into myth. During the Gold Rush, Murrieta traveled to California with some relatives and friends. There, a bunch of drunken Anglos raped his wife, tortured him and hung his brother. During the next few years, Murrieta, consumed with rage, disguising himself as an old man, an Indian or what have you, allegedly searched out every one of the torturers and killed them. He became a symbol of Mexican animosity against the English-speaking establishment. The U.S. authorities placed a bounty on his head. He was captured, sentenced to death and decapitated. According to some sources, Murrieta's head, like that of Pancho Villa, has been wandering from one hand to another without rest.

Where is it? Why is this legendary Hispanic hero headless? Is his pilgrimage a symbol? After exploring the issue, Rodriguez has one of his characters say: "All of us need to face our guilts and fears, if we are to become reconciled with one another." The message is clear: the Anglo and Hispanic worlds are drastically different in content and form; to coexist, an intense spiritual renovation has to take place, otherwise Murrieta will remain decapitated.

Rodriguez is an easy target of attack. Yet, though he might be alone, he is not aloof. He is a voice of consciousness, a rebel and *agent provocateur*. While his views might be simplistic and detached from his people, his style of prose and his strength of mind are admirable. He personifies the American dream in an era of nightmares.

—Ilan Stavans

THE FIRST STONE

MR. FIXIT

By Joel Bleifuss

The House of Representative's October Surprise Task Force report might lead some people with hyperactive synapses to conclude that this is a conspiracy bigger than they ever imagined. True, the report is a whitewash, but to jump from there to the belief that the cover-up was part of a larger cabal misses the mark.

Like the court in Hans Christian Andersen's "The Emperor's New Clothes," the Beltway's syncopated sycophants are loath to face unpleasant truths. The Task Force, blinded by power, missed the mark and applied the broad brush of official censure for reasons that are altogether banal—and thus more insidious than any conspiratorial cockamamie.

The report released last month provides loads of details, many new, concerning allegations that in 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign officials conspired with representatives of the Ayatollah Khomeini to delay the release of the 52 American hostages held in Iran. However, as I wrote two weeks ago, and as should be obvious to anyone who reads the report, the evidence compiled by the investigators fails to support the Task Force's conclusions that there were no secret meetings between the Republicans and the Iranians.

Although the Washington press corps covered the January 13 news conference at which Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN) dismissed the October Surprise allegations, apparently no reporters bothered to read the complete report.

One person who did read the report was former Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA), who served on the Task Force committee. And his reading of the report led him to prepare a dissenting opinion that he had intended to attach to the body of the report. But, according to sources that requested anonymity, that dissension was scuttled at the last moment due to intense pressure from Hamilton and Task Force Chief Counsel Larry Barcella. Consequently, the only refer-

ence in the report to Dymally's dissension is one line appended to the section "Office Space and Equipment" that reads: "Retiring Representative Dymally has declined to sign the report."

Dymally would have released the statement he prepared if members of the national press had shown an interest. But few called to ask why he didn't sign on to the report. Besides, Dymally, now in the private sector, is planning to invest his accumulated political capital in a new business venture and has little to gain from exposing unpleasant truths to Washington's naked rulers.

The driving force behind the preparation of the Task Force report was Larry Barcella, a lawyer who since 1970 has popped in and out of government service. Barcella is known in Washington for tenaciously pursuing his objectives, faithfully

following orders and cultivating good media relations. One person who knows Barcella said that there are two kinds of people in official Washington—those with no backbone and those with a sliver of backbone. Barcella, according to this source, is the latter.

Peter Truell and Larry Gurwin in their recent book on BCCI, *False Profits*, write that Barcella, a BCCI defense lawyer, was "apparently quite sensitive to the interests of the U.S. intelligence community during his days as a federal prosecutor." Barcella got his start prosecuting the assassins of Orlando Letelier, the exiled Chilean who was murdered by Pinochet's hired guns in September 1976. He was unfailing in his pursuit of the culprits.

Barcella was less interested in pursuing their connections to U.S. intelligence. The CIA had orchestrated the overthrow of Chile's democratic government in 1973, but the agency was not involved in the assassination. However, some CIA officials got word that a plot against Letelier was coming and did nothing to stop it. One of these was Theodore Shackley, whom then-CIA Director George Bush had appointed as associate deputy director of operations.

After the Letelier case, Barcella went on to prosecute Edwin Wilson, the rogue CIA officer who will spend the rest of his life doing time for his crimes. Wilson claimed that his criminal activities had been sanctioned by the agency. Implicated with Wilson in fraudulent dealings was one of his business partners, Shackley. Peter Maas, in his book *Manhunt*, recounts how Michael Ledeen, the State Department's terrorism expert, paid his friend Barcella a nighttime visit to vouch for Shackley, who was eventually let off the hook.

From there it was on to the Iran-contra scandal, where Barcella played a bit role as a helpful lawyer for the North network. Truell and Gurwin report that in 1985 Barcella advised the Pentagon on how "the sale of arms to the contras by private individuals" could be done legally. In effect

Barcella, then an assistant U.S. attorney, advised a Pentagon official, who he refuses to name, how to ship weapons to the contras without breaking the Arms Export Control Act. Barcella's advice was later followed by John Singlaub.

Three years later Barcella entered BCCI's shadowy realm. As Truell and Gurwin observe, "Because of the Letelier and Wilson cases, Barcella developed excellent contacts in the press and a great deal of credibility. This would come in quite handy when he became one of the most forceful apologists for BCCI."

In October 1988, the top two officers of First American Bankshares (BCCI's U.S. branch), Clark Clifford and Robert Altman, hired Barcella to defend BCCI against charges of laundering drug money. From October 1988 through August 1990, BCCI paid the firm for which he worked \$2.159 million for services rendered.

As the de facto PR spokesman for BCCI, Barcella fended off embarrassing questions. According to *BCCI, the CIA and Foreign Intelligence*, a report prepared by Sen. John Kerry's (D-MA) subcommittee on terrorism, narcotics and international operations, when Barcella was questioned in the summer of 1991 as to whether there were any ties between First American Bankshares and BCCI, Barcella declared such speculation "absurd." In fact, BCCI owned First American, and the CIA, according to the Kerry report, "made extensive use of First American for a variety of purposes"—as did the North network.

Interestingly enough, the October Surprise Task Force under Barcella's leadership failed to point out that two characters whose 1980 activities were probed by the Task Force, John Shaheen and Cyrus Hashemi, also had a connection to BCCI.

Shaheen was a close friend and former intelligence colleague of 1980 Reagan-Bush Campaign Director William Casey. Both men are now dead, and, as the Task Force reported, passports and diary entries relevant to both men's whereabouts in 1980 have disappeared. Hashemi, also deceased, was an Iranian banker/arms dealer whose brother Jamshid alleges that Casey met with the Iranians in Madrid twice in the summer of 1980.

In the fall of 1980, Shaheen and Cyrus Hashemi had extensive business dealings that involved BCCI money. Further, according to the Kerry report, "Shaheen had been the prime mover of the creation of two Hong Kong banks in early 1981, capitalized with \$20 million which allegedly came from Shaheen's friend, Princess Ashraf, sister of

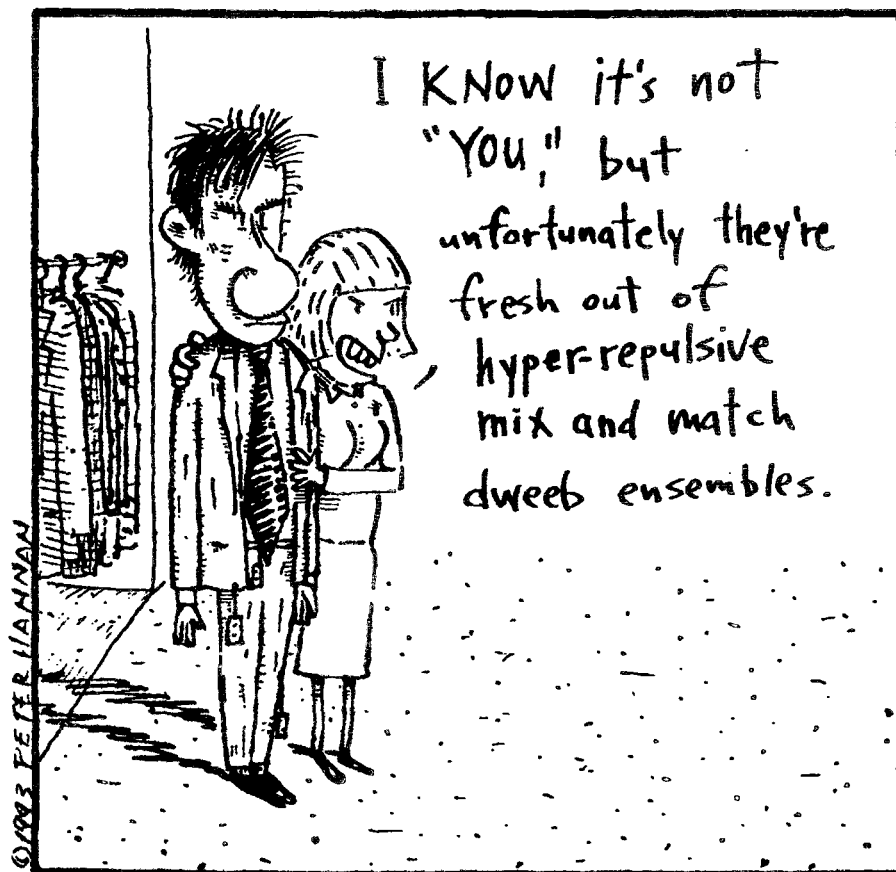
the former Shah of Iran, and formed within days of Casey's selection as director of the CIA [on January 28, 1981] ... The person who allegedly solicited the funds from Ashraf was Shaheen's business partner, Cyrus Hashemi. The timing of the formation of [the banks] raised questions two years later, after both banks collapsed, causing substantial depositor losses, amounting to several hundred million dollars. Among the questions the collapses raised was whether the two banks had been used to launder money for covert operations on the part of U.S. or Middle Eastern intelligence agencies.... Of interest is the fact that [in addition to having officers in common with BCCI, the two banks] made use of the identical structures for doing business that BCCI adopted." The report also makes this intriguing observation: "Shortly after the collapse of the two Hong Kong banks, Shaheen received a top intelligence medal from the CIA for having provided important services to the agency."

Was there a connection between the \$20 million in Iranian royal family assets, Hashemi, Shaheen and Casey, and the October Surprise? The October Surprise Task Force report doesn't ask that question—it doesn't even mention the affair.

In the next issue, I will examine other curious omissions and anomalies in the October Surprise Task Force report. ◀

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Lost in transition

The type of industrial policy that is now in vogue reflects the vices of both Washington and corporate America.

By John B. Judis
WASHINGTON D.C.

In the early '80s, when a small, intrepid band of policy intellectuals began proposing that the U.S. adopt an industrial policy—a strategy of government intervention to bolster competitiveness—they were almost universally scorned. Industrial policy, said Jerry J. Jasinowski, former Carter administration official and executive vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), “is irrelevant, unworkable and likely to worsen our industrial problems.”

But a decade later, industrial policy has become *de rigueur* in Washington. It happened even before Bill Clinton's election. Last April *Business Week* did a special issue trumpeting the virtues of industrial policy. “Call it what you will, the nation needs a plan to nurture growth,” the magazine declared. Even NAM joined the chorus. William Morin, NAM's director of technology, told *Defense News*,

“We will have a pragmatic rather than dogmatic approach to industrial policy. It will be a more enthusiastic and activist approach.”

Clinton's victory was the capstone of industrial policy's march from ignominy to celebrity. At Clinton's December economic summit, four of the original proponents of industrial policy—banker Felix Rohatyn, economist Laura Tyson, policy expert Robert Reich and business consultant Ira Magaziner—were present, and the latter three joined Clinton's administration. Not only Clinton himself but Vice President Al Gore has been an outspoken advocate of government industrial policies. Industrial policy will be central to the economic strategy that the administration plans to unveil this month.

It sounds like another success story in the history of ideas—and a cause for rejoicing among liberals who favor a greater public role in private commerce. But when one looks closer at what *Business Week*, the NAM or congressional Democrats now *mean*

by industrial policy, one discovers that the term's connotation has changed substantially from the early '80s. Industrial policy used to be about restructuring American business; now it is about subsidizing it. Industrial policy used to be something worth cheering; now it is something to be wary of.

In its original form, industrial policy represented an alternative to both New Deal liberalism and Reagan conservatism. It entailed government intervention not simply in the macroeconomy of budgets and taxes, but in the way investments are made and work is organized. The idea had its roots in European social democracy and in '60s utopian radicalism.

The three people most responsible for its introduction were Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner. Rohatyn, a partner at Lazard Freres in New York, had been a protégé of French planner Jean Monnet and a student of European social democracy. He had also served as the chairman of the Municipal Assistance Corporation that oversaw New York's finances, and was influenced by the success of the Chrysler and New York City bailouts.

Rohatyn believed that the same approach could be applied to other American industries and cities. He wanted the government to create a development bank modeled on the Depression-era Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The bank, overseen by a tripartite commission from business, government and labor, would grant loans to ailing industries in exchange for their agreement to undergo “shared sacrifice” and to use their capital to improve their firm's long-run prospects.

Rohatyn's form of industrial policy did not simply consist of subsidies. It rested on an explicit agreement, a new social contract among labor, business and government.

Reich, a former counsel of the Federal Trade Commission, and Magaziner, a whiz kid from the Boston Consulting Group, were both veterans of the '60s ferment. Writing in 1981 in *Minding America's Business*, they argued that the United States already had an industrial policy headquartered in the Pentagon and other federal agencies, but that it was totally uncoordinated and subject to the imperatives of the Cold War and the whims of political pork-barrelling. They wanted to make it explicit and subject to clear government control and direction.

Reich and Magaziner proposed putting federal research and development funding, antitrust policy and trade relief under a new agency that would self-consciously coordinate federal policy to improve industries' competitiveness. Like Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner wanted to use the promise of subsidies and trade and antitrust relief to exact changes in

behavior from industry. They thought government should exact a *quid pro quo* for aid it conferred.

Even more than Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner were critical of sclerotic labor-management relations and of managers' use of their funds for what Reich called "paper entrepreneurialism"—buying other businesses, speculating in real estate and currency. Their watchword was "restructuring." The two wrote, "The key goals of industrial policy are economic restructuring and improvement of competitive productivity."

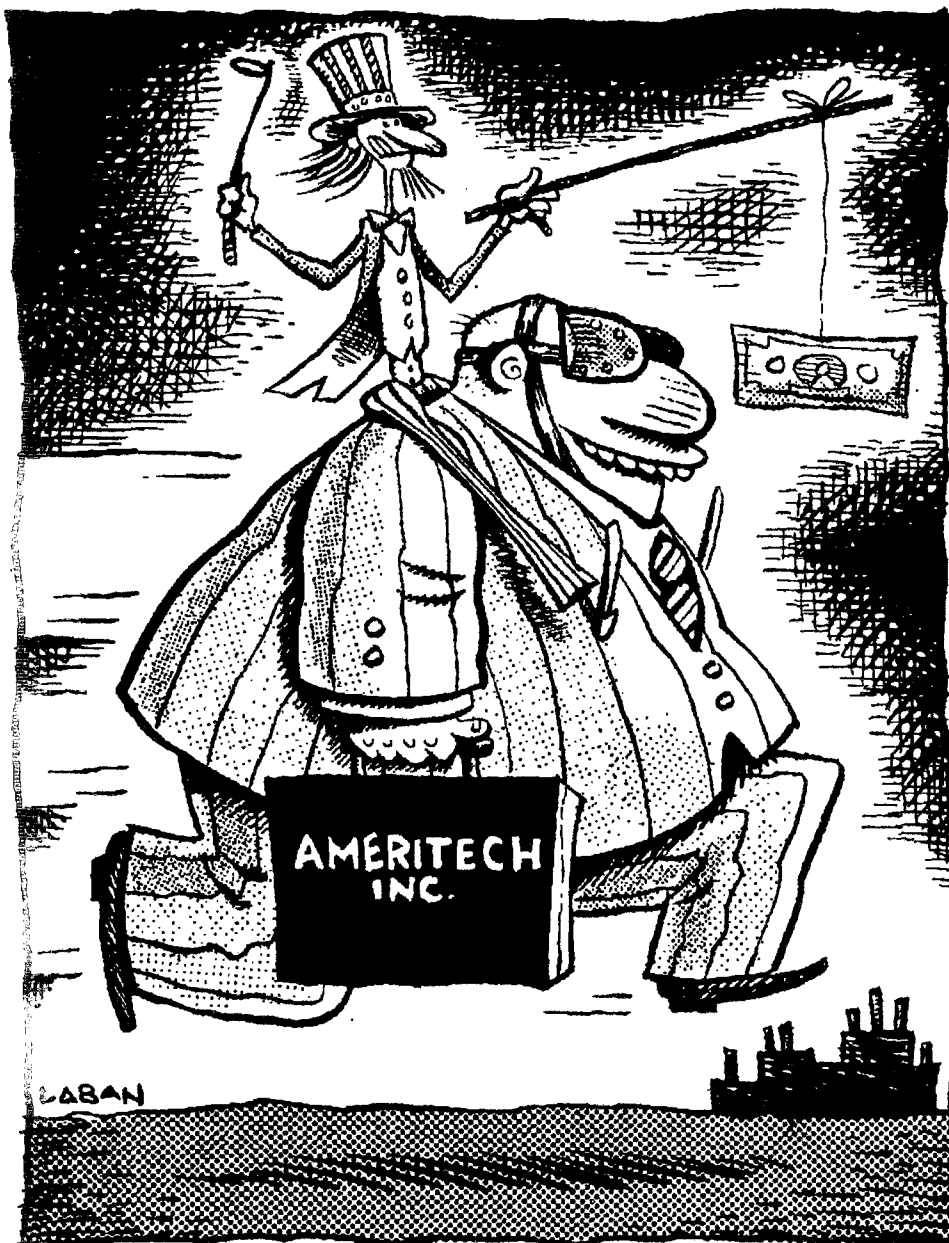
Liberal policy experts and neo-liberal Democrats liked Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner's ideas, but most business leaders heartily disapproved of a plan that would force fundamental changes upon them. Once the recovery began in 1984, most Washington policy experts returned to the illusions of Reagan-era supply-side economics and deregulation.

Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale did not even include industrial policy in his 1984 presidential campaign.

But the idea did not disappear. It went underground and then reappeared under a different name—competitiveness strategy. In 1984, the Reagan administration tried to co-opt the concept of industrial policy by setting up the Commission on Industrial Competitiveness, chaired by Hewlett-Packard CEO John Young. When Young's commission issued a report recommending government action, however, Reagan officials balked at accepting it. The commission was disbanded.

In 1986, Young and CEOs from Motorola, Xerox and other high-tech firms set up a private Council on Competitiveness (not to be confused with the similarly named council headed by former Vice President Dan Quayle) that issued reports warning that the U.S. was falling behind Japan in critical technologies and urging government action. The council's competitiveness strategy descended from what Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner had called industrial policy.

Some of the same firms that set up the Council on Competitiveness sparked the creation in



1988 of Sematech, a consortium of semiconductor firms that won \$100 million annual government funding from DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, to devise new manufacturing processes for the next generation of computer chips. Reagan went along with Sematech because he believed it was necessary for national security.

During the Bush years, American businesses and trade associations, aided by the Council on Competitiveness and other organizations like Rebuild America, fought to secure funding for high-tech research and for other consortia. While they were spurned by the Bush administration, they won Democratic support for a series of initiatives that were included last summer in a "U.S. Economic Leadership Strategy." The Democratic plan, which Gore sponsored and which the Democrats have reintroduced this winter, embraced government investment in fiber-optic communication networks and bullet trains, expansion of civilian research and

development, conversion of federal defense laboratories to civilian use, subsidies for firms to commercialize products using advanced technologies, funding of new environmental technologies and tougher trade laws to force open foreign markets.

Clinton echoed these proposals in his campaign. In addition, he called for "a new federal agency to support and coordinate research in developing new, critical civilian technologies and moving these ideas to the marketplace." As the fog of the Reagan-Bush years lifted, Democrats and the business press began to describe these initiatives as an "industrial policy."

But along the way something happened to the underlying idea of industrial policy. These policies consisted primarily of subsidies and tax breaks for high-technology industry. In its special issue, *Business Week* described industrial policy approvingly as boosting "research spending across a wide range of technologies," granting tax breaks to make it "cheaper for the private sector to invest in research, devel-

opment, and new equipment," providing "technical assistance" for smaller companies and funding "high-speed communications networks."

None of these proposals exacted a *quid pro quo* from business or labor that would lead to restructuring American industry. Instead, these proposals amounted to transferring to the civilian sector the methods that the Pentagon used to create a viable military industry. These proposals also mirror the kind of government stimulus programs that the Transportation and Agriculture Departments have tried for years. In their industrial policy, Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner offered public subsidies in order to encourage industry to use their private funds more productively. In the congressional and business version of industrial policy, these subsidies are no longer the means, but the end.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with subsidies. Government subsidies helped to build the American aircraft and computer industries and to make American agriculture the most produc-

tive on earth. But in the present context, public subsidies aren't large enough to fill America's investment gap. Most of the capital available to investment is in private—not public—hands. IBM's recently announced \$1 billion cuts in product development exceeded the entire budget for DARPA.

Kenneth Courtis, senior economist for the Deutsche Bank in Tokyo, told the Joint Economic Committee last May that the U.S. would have to boost its private spending on plant, equipment and research and development by \$891 billion a year to remain competitive with Japan. Harvard Business School professor Michael Porter estimated \$500 billion at Clinton's economic summit. Unless private

ROUGH CUTS

By JA Reid

Begging the Question



industry mobilizes its resources, American firms won't be able to compete.

But it will take more than subsidies to get these firms to invest their own resources productively. As Porter told Clinton at his economic summit, while Japanese firms spent the '80s investing in R&D and new plant and equipment, American firms invested in real estate and other companies. Even when firms did plow back their profits into new technology, they failed because they ignored labor-management relations. In the mid-'80s, General Motors spent \$600 million building a plant in Detroit that used an unprecedented 260 robots. But it neglected to teach its workers how to use the robots and eventually the plant became one of the least productive in America—taking twice as long to produce a car as the average Ford or Japanese plant.

Government can ensure that firms don't squander their capital by changing securities laws to encourage companies to focus on long-range profits rather than on their quarterly balance sheets. Porter and others have advocat-

ed requiring firms to put workers and even consumers on their boards of directors and allowing lending institutions to own and sell stock. Government can also encourage, or insist upon, increased worker training and greater worker involvement in shop-floor decisions. But most firms will not do any of these things on their own.

The first proponents of industrial policy understood that government had to go beyond offering subsidies. Rohatyn, Reich and Magaziner had the brilliant idea that they could reform corporate practices and provide subsidies at the same time by making the subsidies contingent upon changes in corporate behavior. Unfortunately, those who now favor industrial policy have conveniently forgotten this part of the original plan.

They have created a version of industrial policy that reflects the vices of both Washington and corporate America. The public should think twice before endorsing it. ◀

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PUBLIC POLICY

All in the family

Family and medical leave is welcome but only a tiny first step.

By David Moberg

First, let's take a moment to celebrate. After seven years of effort in Congress, despite two Bush vetoes, finally the law will require employers to grant workers family and medical leave. That means most workers will be able to leave work for up to 12 weeks a year without pay or penalty when they return (but with health insurance) to care for newborn or adopted children or for children, a spouse, parents or themselves when seriously ill. After Clinton failed repeatedly in his first weeks in office to sustain his campaign image as champion of the middle class, this is a welcome political victory for him as well.

But now let's get brutally realistic. By the standards of what other industrialized countries provide or of what is needed to help families function well in contemporary society, this legisla-

tion is chump change.

Businesses with fewer than 50 employees—which totals 95 percent of all firms and roughly 40 percent of all workers—are excluded. According to a study by 9 to 5, the national association of working women, fewer than 40 percent of working women can take advantage of the full unpaid leave without severe financial hardship.

Virtually all other industrial countries provide new mothers paid maternity leave, typically for about four months but for as much as a year in Sweden, often at 80 to 90 percent of normal pay. In addition, most European countries offer parental leave—for either mothers or fathers to care for children—of 10 weeks to three years duration, usually with low or no pay, as well as additional leave to care for sick children. In many cases, new parents have the right to request part-time employment.

Often union contracts or savvy employers provide more than the statutory minimum. When governments strongly support families, a report sponsored by the Families and Work Institute in New York concluded, employers are more likely to take additional steps on their own.

Sweden has long served as a social democratic family policy shrine: besides its broad parental leaves, Sweden provides heavily subsidized child care for virtually all preschool children at day-care centers or through home care “day mothers,” and pays a uniform, tax-exempt child allowance to parents of all children under 16.

France likewise recognizes a public mission to “welcome” and “awaken” all children through comprehensive education and support. New mothers get four months of leave paid at 84 percent of earnings. About 30 percent of children attend a variety of public day-care programs, for which parents pay a sliding scale according to income. The government encourages use of licensed, trained day-care providers by paying for benefits, such as social security, and setting minimum wages and standards. From age three, virtually every child goes to a free all-day preschool (with child care available at modest cost before and after school). The government also integrates maternal and infant health care into its child-care programs. French employers pay a universal payroll tax of 9 percent that helps fund child care and provides all families, regardless of income, a child allowance (about \$1,100 a year for two children), plus supplements for needy families.

The United States should aim to meet at least the standards set by these similar or even less wealthy industrial countries, even if details differ. Victory on family and medical leave, however modest, can be a point of departure for a campaign for a national family policy that follows the winning principle of social security: make the policy universal and win strong support across the board by helping everyone while delivering progressive benefits that help the poor the most.



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Clinton's reported sympathy for the federal government buying all childhood vaccines and distributing them free to public and private clinics is a solid example of the benefit of such universalism. The strategy would drive down the cost of vaccines, guarantee nearly universal protection (now only 40 to 60 percent of preschool kids get needed shots), and reduce both the suffering and high costs to the health care system that result from inadequate vaccination. The plan would cost \$300 to \$500 million, but studies suggest there would be a return of \$10 to society—by reducing future costs—for every dollar invested.

Ironically, the vaccination project is more in harmony with the single-payer, global-budget national health insurance on the Canadian model than Clinton's favored "managed competition." The director of the Congressional Budget Office recently reported that such a single-payer system has the best chance of controlling health care costs (see story on page 8).

Much of Clinton's strategy "to end welfare as we know it" could be incorporated as part of a comprehensive family policy that aims to make child care, preschool and family allowances (perhaps scaled according to need) available to everyone. There would still be the daunting tasks of training and finding or creating jobs for long-term welfare recipients. Nevertheless, shifting people from welfare to work would be easier, and much of the stigma and social divisiveness

of welfare would be eliminated, if all families were part of a universal support network.

The rationale for a family policy is simple: families are the key institution for reproducing society. Yet, contrary to the conservative notion, families are not independent social molecules. Children of families from all backgrounds thrive, for example, with strong early childhood education. By asserting that society takes all families and children seriously, the growing, neediest ranks of children in poverty will be most helped, but everyone will ultimately benefit.

A reasonable family policy would include at least the following elements:

- Paid leave of three months for working mothers. Parental leave at reduced pay for both parents. (This, like some of the costs of subsidies for child care, might be financed by an employer payroll tax.)

- An expanded deduction (or tax credit) for each dependent child. Tripling the current deduction would restore the value it had in 1948.

- Increased enforcement of child support. (Only half of women get all of what they're owed by former husbands.)

- The government should pay social security, unemployment insurance and other benefits for all child care-workers who are both licensed and paid at least the minimum wage. (This would do more than get Zoë Baird off the hook: better conditions for child-care workers will increase the quality and quantity of caregivers and ease family financial burdens, especially for low- to moderate-income working people.) Increase tax credits for child care. Provide day-care centers with fees set on a sliding scale (with nearly full subsidies for the poorest clients).

- Provide universal national health insurance (which would, among many other benefits, guarantee health care to the half of poor children not now covered by Medicaid).

- Raise the minimum wage (and index it to the median wage), as well as expand earned income tax credits, so that single parents have a chance of supporting a family.

- Provide federal subsidies, to be accompanied by state and local taxes and modest sliding-scale payments by parents, to guarantee full-day preschool for all children three years old and older. (This would encompass the still-unfulfilled goal of fully funding Headstart, which in 1990 reached only 27 percent of eligible children.)

- Similar subsidies should be available for converting school facilities, where possible, into child care/community centers with expanded hours, or creating new preschools where needed.

- Encourage "family-friendly" work environments, such as greater flexibility for workers (most flexibility now comes at their expense and at the whim of the employer).

- Expand targeted assistance to children and youth from poor or troubled family backgrounds. Presently, fewer than half of those eligible for Women, Infant and Children nutritional programs receive aid. Other pre- and post-natal care, now haphazardly delivered, would be encompassed under national health insurance. Home visits by social workers

could also help poor families become aware of opportunities. Counseling teenagers—and making contraceptives readily available—could reduce the number of teen pregnancies.

If the United States duplicated France's family policies, it would cost about \$23 billion a year (\$13 billion federal, \$10 billion state and local), or about three times what is currently spent, according to a study financed by the Franco-American Foundation. (Some part of that total would reflect simply a shift from current private spending to the public sector.) The political climate is clearly hostile to such spending now, but the United States unquestionably could afford these policies if there were the political commitment. The rightful preoccupation of the moment is public and private investment that will increase both productivity and jobs. Yet at least part of this family policy spending deserves to be seen as a social investment with a payoff that yields a more efficient, as well as more humane, society.

Studies have estimated that prenatal care saves \$3.38 for every dollar spent in later health costs and that preschool education saves \$3 to \$6 for every dollar spent in remedial education, welfare and crime control. One study of home visits by social workers combined with preschool showed that such a program dramatically reduced the rate of dropouts, welfare, unemployment and criminal activity, and increased literacy and advanced education. While most studies focus on poor children, where there may be the biggest bang for the buck, all children can benefit from a society that more adequately provides for them.

There are other potential efficiencies flowing from rational family policies. They could strengthen families by reducing stresses. Although the long-term trend in all industrial societies is toward more divorces, the United States is far ahead of most other industrial countries, which have provided more family support. In the case of divorce, children would not suffer financially as much as they do now. Many of the social problems, including crime and urban violence—which are worsened by strained and cracked families—might be moderated.

Employers would find that their workers were less distracted by the child-care juggling that now preoccupies many families. More women could enter the workforce, thus raising family incomes and lessening the need for welfare. A 1982 census study found that 45 percent of non-working single mothers and 22 percent of non-working mothers in two-parent families would work if they could find adequate child care.

Today, only 4 percent of American families follow the old pattern of Dad the breadwinner, Mom at home with the kids. Clearly, old institutions built around that model no longer work. The economic decline of the bottom three-fifths of the country strengthens the case for a broad-based family strategy.

Building a new framework around the changed families is important for both social and economic renewal. Family and medical leave is but a very small step in that direction. ◀

CZECH REPUBLIC

Behind the Velvet Curtain

W

hen Czechoslovakia formally dissolved itself on January 1, many Czechs were relieved to be free of provincial Slovakia. The Czechs had always thought of themselves as the real democrats of the marriage and the Slovaks the petty nationalists.

But the Czech Republic, now independent, is confronting its own upsurge of chauvinism, every bit as ugly as that around it. Although still on a smaller scale than its former East bloc counterparts, the Czechs' "beer hall nationalism" has spawned a successful ultra-right party, a growing skinhead movement and a rash of bloody racial violence. Human rights observers speak of "running race wars" between Czechs and Gypsies in northern Bohemian cities. But for the new government, elected on a radical free-market platform, the worsening of racial ten-

sions is a non-issue. Its first—and only—concern, it admits, is the economy, and until it is on its feet "lesser" problems will wait their turn.

In the heady days of the 1989 revolution, the rise of right-wing and racist movements in the Czech lands seemed inconceivable. The Velvet Revolution and its personal symbol, playwright Vaclav Havel, embodied all that was noble and moral, democratic and liberal in the Czech character (see story on page 24). On the streets, the Czechs and their Slovak brothers appeared to be in unanimous consent with the dissidents' starry vision of a civic society.

But over the past three years a more diverse picture of Czech society has emerged. In the 1992 elections, the party of the former Charter 77 dissidents failed even to breach the 5 percent hurdle necessary for parliamentary representation. Last year, the ultra-right Republican Party scored the underdog upset of the parliamentary elections, making its way into the legislature with more than 6

percent of the vote. The party's populist appeal illustrated all too vividly the deep schism between the dissident and the average person.

The first signs that all was not well in the land of the Velvet fairy tale surfaced in April 1990, when a wave of right-wing violence against Gypsies and Vietnamese workers captured headlines in northern Bohemia. In the industrial cities, racist Czech skinheads and a confused hybrid of Nazi-punks attacked unarmed Gypsies. Simultaneously, skinhead troops intensified their campaign against Czechoslovakia's foreign workers, the majority of whom are Vietnamese. On May 19, 1990, 200 skinheads wreaked havoc in central Prague, turning on a Canadian tourist group after they had beaten up the Gypsies and Vietnamese on the main square.

Havel responded immediately to the violence by saying, "Since the explosion of freedom, we have witnessed in this country the inherent responsibility and some of the dark and evil sides of the human character." He echoed widespread rumors at the time that disillusioned elements of the old apparatus, particularly the security forces, stood behind the violence.

Racial tensions, however, existed in the Czech lands long before the dictatorship's front men lost their jobs. The animosity had been simmering for years.

Actually, it was while Havel pondered the human condition from behind bars in the mid-'80s that an underground world of neo-Nazi oi bands and skinhead hate culture found an audience in Prague. By 1987, tourists who knew what they were looking at could see classic skinheads, their ears sticking out from their round, razored heads, at cafes in the Prague Old Town. Demonic underground heavy metal oi bands, such as the notorious group Orlik, stirred hatred

Now independent, this new nation is confronting its own brand of chauvinism, every bit as ugly as that around it.

By Paul Hockenos
PRAGUE



against punks, Gypsies, foreign workers, Third World students, Slovaks and tourists.

In the revolution's aftermath, legal Orlik concerts drew as many as 600 skinheads. Their stage sets brandished full-size color posters of Miroslav Sladek, leader of the newly formed Republican Party. In a matter of months, the number of skinheads and their fellow travelers seemed to double and triple. Today, experts estimate there are about 1,000 active skins in Prague and roughly 2,500 throughout northern Bohemia. Their supporters run into the tens of thousands.

The fact that Czechoslovakia's Third World guests were among the first recipients of skinhead terror came as little surprise to the victims themselves. In the late '70s, the Vietnamese government offered the services of its workers to the short-handed Czechoslovak economy. Quartered in work-

ers' hostels, the guest workers received the barest language training and only a thin introduction to Czech society. The state put the Vietnamese to work at the most menial jobs and promptly forgot about them.

A problem more deeply embedded in Czech culture is that of the Gypsies. As throughout Central and Eastern Europe, the roughly 300,000 Gypsies in the Czech lands are the poorest, least educated and most discriminated against of peoples. In one opinion poll, 91 percent of Czechs and Slovaks expressed negative feelings toward Gypsies. Since Nazi measures during World War II claimed the lives of almost all the Czech Gypsies, most of those in the Czech lands today are Slovak Gypsies, repatriated there after the Sudeten Germans' postwar expulsion.

Communist policies, though making dents in chronic problems such as substandard housing and illiteracy, institu-

tionalized the racial prejudices that flourished prior to World War II. The regime treated the minority as a genetically inferior, second class of people, with a worthless culture better plowed beneath the Czech and Slovak cultures. It forcibly sterilized women, suppressed Gypsy language and traditions, liquidated rural settlements and outlawed nomadic wandering.

For a few fleeting months in 1989 and into 1990, the petty, nasty side of Czech nationalism—intolerance, spitefulness and cowardice—vanished along with the dictatorship that epitomized its ethos. But the skinhead violence of spring 1990 signaled the first stage of that ethnic's metamorphosis under democracy.

Unlike its Eastern European relations, Czech beer-hall nationalism centers not around territorial expansion, religious identification, national independence or ethnic minorities abroad. More like Western Europe's New Right, it plays primarily upon the racial prejudices and economic anxieties of the lower and middle classes.

By no coincidence, beer-hall nationalism raised its head first and most fiercely in the polluted industrial wastelands of northern Bohemia. As economic conditions worsen and criminality skyrockets, the Gypsies are the most convenient scapegoats. Routinely splattered across walls is graffiti such as "Genocide for the Gypsies," "Chop the Gypsies to bits" and "Gypsies back to Slovakia."

According to Charles University sociologist Vaclav Trojan, "The first violence was a barometer of deeper social tensions within society." The former dissident argues that these feelings "had been building up for years, and then finally got the signal to explode." Police forces have come under heavy pressure to crack down on Gypsies, or at least to cut the skinheads slack to do the dirty work for them. "Local communities have shown clear popular support for the pogroms, for the skins and for the police," adds Trojan.

The political manifestation of that hatred is the Republican Party, which soared from obscurity onto the Czechoslovak political stage last year. The Republicans marched into parliament for the first time with 10 times the less than 1 percent they garnered in 1990.

From early on, party president Sladek aimed his demagogic message at the disillusioned in Czech society. In those first blissful days of new freedom, Sladek's angry appeals found resonance almost exclusively among skinheads and their sympathizers. The clean-cut 35-year-old bureaucrat-turned-politician openly courted the young militants, posing the Republicans as the party for social security and law and order.

More important was the Republicans' demand to expel all foreign guest workers from Czechoslovakia. In virulently anti-communist soapbox speeches, Sladek wove a simple net to catch the inevitable fallout from the economic transition. He tirelessly traversed the country, painting an opaque picture of society in which impenetrable networks stacked the deck against ordinary citizens. At aggressive, highly charged demonstrations, he rallied against the "communist agents" in Civic Forum, against the secret police "staged" revolution

and against "Gypsy criminality."

As Sladek's star rose in 1990, he tried to distance himself from his jack-booted shock troops. But the issues with which he had first won the skins' hearts remained central to the Republicans' agenda. "Security" gets top billing in the party's program, which calls for new laws that would enable the police to "intervene quickly and responsibly." The manifesto also demands a beefing up of the security apparatus that Sladek claims to have so detested in its communist form.

For all the party's undemocratic trappings, it is its explicitly racist anti-Gypsy proposals that land Sladek and friends squarely in the category of a neo-fascist party. In its program, again under "security," the party vaguely mentions its intention "to solve the problem of the Gypsies by resettling them." In standard Central European phraseology, "resettling" is a polite term for expulsion, in this case sending the Slovak Gypsies in Bohemia and Moravia "back" to Slovakia.

According to Klara Samkova of the Gypsy Civic Initiative (GCI), a Prague-based political party, the Republicans' proposals "violate just about every international statute on human rights that exists." That fact, however, doesn't bother the Republicans. "Sladek is in parliament today because of his hateful rhetoric against Gypsies," says human rights lawyer Samkova. "They used this issue again and again, and that was enough for many people."

The Republicans, not surprisingly, have scored their biggest victories in northern Bohemia—also the site of even stronger showings from the reform communist party. The ultra-right and the left bloc have taken big constituencies from the democratic parties by arguing against full-speed-ahead privatization and the dismantlement of social services. The Republicans' populism has found an audience in the lower and middle classes, disproportionately among working-class men in their twenties. In some Bohemian cities and towns the party has racked up 15 to 20 percent of the vote.

The simple presence of the Republicans in the Czech legislature contributes to the new face of Czech politics after the country's division. Along with the former dissidents, any talk of civil society and expanded forms of democracy has vanished from political discourse. The all-business monetarists of Vaclav Klaus' Civic Democratic Party (CDP) dominate the Czech parliament.

As the partition of Czechoslovakia runs its course, human rights activists in the Czech lands fear that the government's new conservative tint will aggravate tension between minorities and the majority.

"Our two years of grace are over," explains Samkova. "The CDP doesn't see how human rights and minority issues are useful to it. If something doesn't bring it immediate economic profit, it's expendable."

Now, Samkova admits, her only recourse is to knock at the doors of power and politely ask for favors.

Paul Hockenos' upcoming book, *Free to Hate: The Rise of the Right in Post-Communist Eastern Europe* (Routledge), will be published later this year.

EASTERN EUROPE

There is no Godot

*The Czech
president
comes to
grips with
impatience –
his country's
and his own –
in a post-
communist
world.*

By Vaclav Havel

I come from a country that lived for long years awaiting its freedom. Allow me to take this opportunity to share with you some thoughts on waiting.

There is more than one way to wait. Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* stands at one extreme of the broad range of ways of waiting, embodying deliverance or universal salvation. For many of us who lived in the communist world, waiting was often, if not always, close to that outer limit. Surrounded, enclosed, colonized from within by the totalitarian system, individuals lost any expectation of finding a way out. In a word, they lost hope.

Yet, they did not lose the need to hope, nor could

they lose it, for without hope life loses its meaning. That is why they were waiting for Godot. But Godot never comes, simply because he does not exist. He is only a substitute for hope—the hope of the hopeless.

At the other end of the range is another way of hoping: hope as patience. That hope is inspired by the belief in resisting and in telling the truth as a matter of principle, without knowing whether one's commitment will ever bear fruit.

In a secondary way, this is also a hope inspired by the conviction that a seed once sown will take root and grow. No one knows when. Perhaps for other generations. This attitude requires and cultivates patience. It is waiting as a state of hope, not as an expression of despair.

Waiting for the sprouting of a seed that in itself is good is different from waiting for Godot. Waiting for Godot means waiting for the flowering of a blossom that we never planted.

During the past three years, since the peaceful anti-totalitarian revolution in Czechoslovakia, I was often plunged into an impatience bordering on despair. I was tormented by the idea that the changes were moving too slowly—that my country did not have a new democratic constitution, that the

Czechs and Slovaks had not agreed to coexist in the same state, that we were too slow to eliminate the remains of the old regime and all its moral barrenness.

I desperately wanted at least one of those goals to be reached, so that I could strike it from the list as something settled and done with. I had trouble resigning myself to a political situation that seemed to have no end, like history itself, a process that never allows us to say: There, that's finished, completed, done. It was as if I had simply forgotten to wait, to wait in the only way that has a meaning.

Today, with hindsight, I have had time to think about that. And I am beginning to understand that my impatience made me vulnerable to something that I had always subjected to critical analysis. I was succumbing to that highly destructive form of impatience that characterizes modern technocratic civilization, which, steeped in rationality, is wrongly convinced that the world is just a crossword-puzzle matrix where only one correct answer will solve the problem. An answer whose timing I alone would decide. In short, I thought that time was my servant. That was a great mistake.

The world, being and history do not blindly bow to the demands of a technocrat. They are not there to fulfill his forecasts. They resist his plans, just as they do not accept his destructive explanation. The world, being and history have their surprises and their secrets that can overwhelm modern



reason, and they follow a tortuous and invisible path of their own.

Political man of today and tomorrow—"postmodern political man"—has to learn how to wait, in the best and deepest sense of the word. It is no longer a matter of waiting for Godot. This wait must be based on a desire to leave things free to run their course and reveal their real nature and substance. The behavior of postmodern political man should not begin from an impersonal analysis but from a personal vision. Instead of taking pride as his cue, he should take humility as his nourishment.

The Utopians who think that the world can be completely controlled end up triggering unspeakable suffering. Detached from the human soul, modern reason setting itself up as the arbiter of all political endeavor can lead only to violence.

I come from a country of impatient people. They are

impatient perhaps because they had long been waiting for Godot and had the feeling that he had finally arrived. That is as monumental a mistake as the mistake they made in waiting. Godot did not come. And that is just fine. For if a Godot had come, he would have been the imaginary Godot, the communist Godot. Still, what needed to mature did mature. This fruit would perhaps have ripened sooner if we had been better at watering it. We now have only one task before us: reaping the fruits of this harvest in new seeds and watering them patiently.

There is no reason to be impatient if the sowing and watering are properly done. If we know that our wait is not meaningless, that is all we need to know. ◀

Excerpted from a speech by Vaclav Havel, president of the Czech Republic. *In These Times* thanks *Le Monde* and *World Press Review* for their translations.

HONG KONG

Democracy is a hard sell

T

his is a city on edge. Not since the tense negotiations over Hong Kong's future back in 1983-84 has there been so much anxiety over the fate of this last British colony, which is slated to be handed back to China on June 30, 1997.

At issue: How much democracy will Hong Kong have before and after 1997?

For Hong Kong's democracy advocates, who battled the British for decades on the issue, 1993 is a do-or-die proposition—the last chance to install a genuine democratic system before 1995, which is the year of the last legislative elections before Chinese rule. For China's Communist rulers in Beijing, democracy—even a little bit of it—is a mortal threat to the continuation of the one-party state, and thus a virus to be eradicated immediately.

Late this month, Hong Kong Gov. Chris Patten, the

former leader of Britain's Conservative Party, is scheduled to present to the city's Legislative Council (Legco) a detailed plan of democratic reforms. If passed, local residents would for the first time be able to elect, directly or indirectly, all 60 of their representatives. Presently, only 18 Legco members are directly elected.

China, which by signing a so-called Joint Declaration with Britain back in 1984 agreed to raise the number of elected members of Legco to 20 after assuming control of Hong Kong, had counted on its ability to directly appoint or influence the naming of the other 40 council members to give it an iron grip on local politics. Patten cleverly devised a way to increase democracy without transgressing the letter of the two-power agreement.

His solution was simple. Since the Joint Declaration called for an addition of nine new "functional constituency" seats, but didn't ever state how such constituencies were to be defined, he chose to define them broadly as all workers in a certain industry.

As a result, under his proposal every Hong Kong citizen over 18 would be electing two representatives—one based upon geographic location and the other upon occupation. (The latter, somewhat ironically, given China's shrill denunciation of the plan, resembles nothing so much as the worker soviets of Russia's early revolutionary days.) Patten's plan also took advantage of the Joint Declaration's failure to establish a process for the selection of 10 remaining Legco seats currently appointed by the city's mostly unelected local district council members. He called instead for creation of an elected council to appoint those 10 seats.

Beijing, since the unveiling of Patten's reform plan back on October 7, has steadily turned up the verbal heat in an effort to frighten Legco members away from it. First there were condemnations of Patten. Then came threats to abrogate the 1984 Joint Agreement. Finally, in December, China threatened not to honor any contracts reached with the current Hong Kong government and talked of setting up its own legal system instead of retaining the present British one. These escalating threats had the intended effect of knocking the Hong Kong stock market down a whopping 18 percent in just two weeks.

In a city that defines itself as Asia's business center, that was a bitter blow, and it led to a panicky reaction among many local and foreign business leaders, some of whom began calling on the governor to back down. (See accompanying story.)

Opposition to Patten's democratic reforms proposal has come from both left and right. The more radical democrats here, as represented by the fledgling United Democrats Party, criticize the plan for being too little too late. Party leaders like Martin Lee say the governor should ignore the

Britain is trying to steer this city in a democratic direction, but is running up against many roadblocks.

By Dave Lindorff

HONG KONG

Joint Declaration as well as the so-called Basic Law (the Hong Kong statute passed by China's National Assembly)—which, after all, doesn't go into effect until the turnover—and simply make all Legco seats directly elected in time for the 1995 elections. That China has threatened to ignore the results of such a vote come 1997 doesn't matter, they say. Present China with a fait accompli and challenge Beijing to take a step that would threaten the city's political and economic stability. As Lee puts it, "Who wants to ride a through train if it's a through train to hell?"

But after over a century of British colonial rule, and faced with the prospect of Chinese dictatorship, most Hong Kong residents seem resigned to their fate. Democracy has not yet caught on. In a recent special election to fill a district council seat, turnout was only 25 percent.

Although Hong Kong, in its trade and investment-oriented public relations, bills itself as an "international city" and a multicultural and multilingual metropolis, it's really two cities. One is indeed a glitzy high-rolling financial center peopled by bilingual and multiracial tycoons and entrepreneurs. The other is a Chinese city of workers, small shop owners and the lower ranks of a civil service, many of whom harbor a deep resentment toward the privileges of the European and, especially, the British residents around them.

Their children go to Cantonese public schools where class size averages 45, while Western children go to government and employer-subsidized English schools where classrooms don't exceed 32 pupils (and where not a thought is given to teaching Cantonese). They are denied British passports despite their having been born in a British colony. They know many of the best jobs are going to native English speakers. And they see the government ready to spend billions of their tax dollars on a controversial new airport pushed by bankers and traders—at the expense of needed housing, welfare, education and health care pro-



Hong Kong
Gov. Chris Patten

grams—while they can't afford to fly anywhere.

On June 30, 1997, many predict that bitter anti-British, anti-Western sentiment will surface in Hong Kong. Indeed, it was fear of such sentiments, and of popular support for China's commu-

nists, which led a string of British governors of the colony since the end of World War II to resist calls for democratic reform here, while such steps were routinely being taken in other British colonies prior to their independence.

Still, most observers expect to see Patten's democratic reforms passed with little alteration by Legco. Should that happen, China can be expected to turn up the heat further. Although the target of China's intimidation to date has been the Hong Kong business community, which dominates Legco, the next target will likely be the people of Hong Kong themselves.

Odd bedfellows

According to economist Milton Friedman, capitalism brings with it the blessings of freedom and democracy. Chileans saw how long that process could take, but Hong Kong's 6 million residents are seeing something else: capitalists siding with communists against democratic reform in the hopes of short-term gain.

Less than a week before Gov. Chris Patten's address here, William Overholt, managing director of Bankers Trust Hong Kong, in an address to the American Chamber of Commerce, cautioned that attempts to make "sudden changes" in Hong Kong's governance were "violating the ground rules" of the Sino-British agreement and compromising the so-called "one country/two systems" arrangement promised by China for Hong Kong. His words curiously echoed similar statements from the New China News Agency, China's unofficial embassy in the city.

Subsequent to announcement of Patten's reform proposal, the Business and Professionals Federation (BPF), which represents hundreds of Hong Kong businesses, declared its opposition to the democratic reforms. "To run the risk of developing a political structure which will be dismantled in four and a half years is just not acceptable to us," said BPF Chair Vincent Lo.

As a short-tongued local political columnist, Neville de Silva of the *Standard*, put it, "What we are seeing today is the congruence of the economic self-interest of some Hong Kong capitalists and the political self-interest of China's repressive leadership."

Odd bedfellows, but perhaps, in a New World Order where world communism is no longer a bogeyman, not all that strange. After all, today's biggest investment opportunities are in China, Vietnam and North Korea.

BLACK AMERICA

Follow what leader?

After a 12-year exile in Washington's backwaters, African-Americans have been swept into the political mainstream by the Democratic wave that deposited William Jefferson Clinton into the White House. Not only will an unprecedented four African-Americans serve in President Clinton's cabinet, but the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has increased to 40 members—a jump of 54 percent from the previous record number of 26. Several black members of the 103rd Congress are zeroing in on influential committee assignments, including Rep. Ronald Dellums (D-CA), who is in line for leadership of the powerful House Armed Services Committee.

African-Americans' growing sense of estrangement is a dilemma for black politicians purporting to represent their constituency.

By Salim Muwakkil

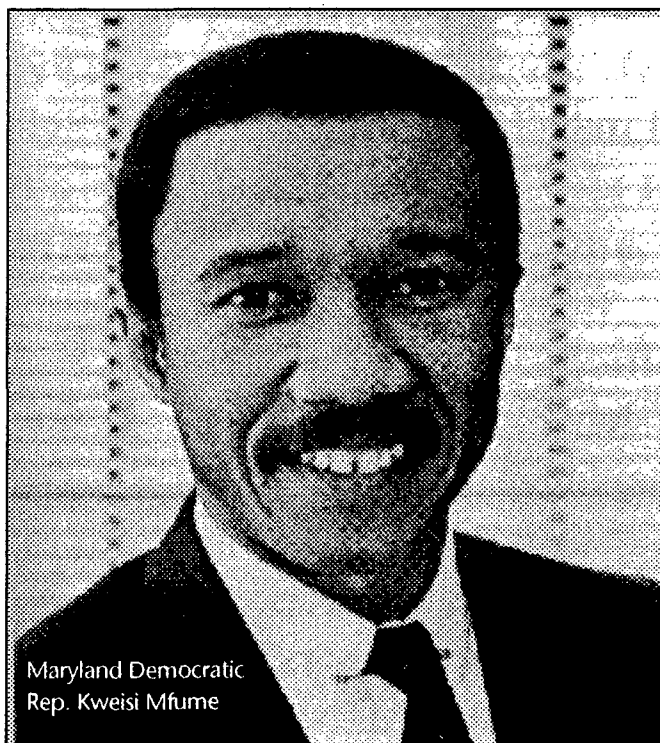
But what does all this political success mean to the African-American electorate? The easy answer is,

not much; even as the political victories have mounted, the general quality of life has significantly declined in most black communities. Murder rates, for example, skyrocketed in the '80s during a period of extraordinary electoral triumphs.

And, not surprisingly, young African-Americans tell researchers that they feel as disconnected from the black political establishment as they do from the white mainstream. This bifurcated pattern characterizes so much of African-American life in the late 20th century: on the one hand, many blacks are enjoying unprecedented success in the mainstream. But at the same time, poverty and its attendant ills are wreaking greater havoc among those African-Americans who lack the requisite skills for mainstream access. The ranks of this latter group are increasing, and the gap between the two is widening.

This growing sense of estrangement is a dilemma for black politicians purporting to represent an African-American constituency. In years past, many black elected officials dismissed that dilemma as a product of unrealistic expectations. Because of the crusading tone of most black candidates' campaigns, they argued, African-Americans erroneously began thinking of politics as a continuation of the civil rights crusade—something it could never be.

But that argument, though mostly true, is losing its reso-



Maryland Democratic
Rep. Kweisi Mfume

nance even among black elected officials. There is growing clamor within the black political establishment for a more activist agenda. Some analysts bemoan this new dissent as a divisive detour, while others praise it as a sign of increasing political maturity. Because of the political need to maintain a solid racial bloc, this intramural dissent among black politicians has not made the news much. However, with black officials gaining new prominence in the return of the Democrats and with the CBC's new heft, those fissures are becoming more apparent.

In fact, dynamics within the CBC manifest this new spirit of dissent. For the first time in the group's history, there was a contested race for the chairman's position. By tradition, the seat automatically belonged to Rep. Kweisi Mfume (D-MD), who served as CBC vice chair in the 102nd Congress. But Rep. Craig Washington (D-TX) bucked that tradition and challenged Mfume's election.

Washington, who came to Congress in 1989 to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Mickey Leland, charged the CBC was becoming increasingly ineffective as a voice for African-Americans and that Mfume's leadership promised little change. His charge echoed many of the criticisms heard in black community forums and black-oriented talk shows across the country. He lost to Mfume in a 27-9 vote. Observers say that the lopsided vote for Mfume represented the power of tradition more than any overwhelming mandate.

Sentiments within the newly invigorated CBC are said to be more evenly divided. Those who support Washington want a more activist and explicitly ideological caucus. Washington's campaign stressed cultivating stronger coalitions—with the Latino and women's caucuses—and more systematic allocations of committee assignments. Although public self-criticism is traditionally discouraged, CBC members like Washington—and, to some extent, Rep. Barbara-Rose Collins (D-MI)—increasingly are challenging that tradition.

Those two members have openly expressed their displeasure with the CBC's ineffectiveness in confronting issues like the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court and a congressional response to the 1992 Los Angeles riots. Interestingly, Dellums cast one of the nine votes for Washington. Not only is Dellums one of the CBC's founders, but many black organizers consider him the most progressive member. Thus, for him to break tradition and vote against Mfume is especially significant.

Mfume is a legislator from Baltimore who was elected in 1986 on a

militant platform of urban empowerment but has mellowed considerably during his years in Congress. He is a member of the House Banking Committee and was one of four African-American representatives—along with Michael Espy (D-MS), John Lewis (D-GA), William Jefferson (D-LA)—who campaigned aggressively for Clinton. In the CBC's political spectrum, Mfume, Lewis, Jefferson and Espy are the “new” Democrats currently riding high on Clinton's clout. Espy, in fact, has since been named secretary of agriculture.

In the CBC's 22-year history, there have seldom been serious disputes over the group's position on varied legislation or federal programs. Building group consensus presented little challenge. But times have changed, and Dellums, who was there in the beginning, is urging the group to change with the times. He is doing this even as he prepares to assume leadership of the House Armed Services Committee.

And Dellums is not the only black representative with expanded congressional responsibilities. In the 103rd Congress, CBC members will hold 13 seats on the four most powerful committees in the House—twice as many as in the 102nd Congress. This new political clout is of minor interest to those growing numbers of African-Americans who feel alienated from their leadership, however. And until political victories are more clearly translated into quality-of-life improvements, the gap between the black leaders and those they presume to lead will widen.



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curriculum.*

By Jim Weiss

Over the years, the atomic power industry, offspring of America's nuclear weapons establishment, has exerted a quiet but effective influence in Washington. Last year, as part of George Bush's National Energy Strategy, it succeeded in obtaining a fast-track "one-step" licensing process for new power plants and cancellation of a billion-dollar debt to the U.S. government for uranium enrichment. But polls indicate that public opinion is overwhelmingly opposed to the proliferation of nuclear power plants called for in Bush's National Energy Strategy. So, with the Clinton administration, the atomic power industry may not find the political nest quite as cozy as previously.

Recognizing this, the industry has set its sights on a major expansion in the next century. Targeting the next generation, it has concentrated on the introduction of pro-nuclear curricula into schools across the country.

This education strategy takes many forms. Annual conventions of science teacher associations provide an opportunity for the American Nuclear Society (ANS) to disseminate literature from tables or booths traditionally utilized by textbook publishers or other vendors of educational materials. ANS materials, frequently in glitzy packages, include lesson plans, student activities and other resources. These materials often present a one-sided view of the complex technical, scientific and social issues surrounding nuclear power and U.S. energy policy. Generally, they downplay the health risks associated with ionizing radiation. Most teachers do not possess the scientific background and level of expertise required for an objective analysis of these materials.

Representatives of radioactive-waste handlers reinforce the impact of ANS presentations at science teacher conventions. Their literature also presents an

oversimplified and misleading perspective on an environmental problem that to date has proved to be intractable. But the most comprehensive effort to insinuate a pro-nuclear agenda into secondary schools is being undertaken by the Department of Energy (DOE).

As part of its energy education mandate, the DOE has contracted with an educational consulting firm to prepare a new curriculum, "Science, Society and America's Nuclear Waste." On July 31, secondary school teachers in every state viewed a satellite teleconference introducing this minicourse. The four-hour workshop included an overview of the curriculum's four units (Nuclear Waste, Ionizing Radiation, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and the Waste Management System); commentary by several DOE-selected experts on various relevant topics; and interviews with the enthusiastic teachers who piloted the program last year. (Several of the teachers were from communities with atomic power plants or DOE nuclear weapons plants, like Oak Ridge, Tenn.)

The stated purpose of this curriculum is to "replace fear with understanding" and prepare the next generation of Americans to deal with the challenge of managing 30 years of accumulated radioactive waste. In actuality, these lessons provide a subliminal message designed to bring atomic power and nuclear waste into the domain of warm fuzzies.

The scene is set in Unit I with repeated emphasis of America's increasing reliance on nuclear generation of electricity, contrasted with the limited usefulness of renewable resources. In several hundred pages of curriculum material, only one-fourth of one page is devoted to conservation platitudes.

Unit I continues with descriptions of different categories of

nuclear waste. "Be sure that students understand that most radioactive waste is low level," advises the Teacher's Guide, "and does not require disposal in a repository." The DOE syllabus characterizes "low-level" waste (LLW) with the all-too-familiar "gloves and booties" clichés, ignoring the fact that these wastes will include entire decommissioned reactors, control rods and other intensely radioactive materials. In describing LLW management history, the DOE text identifies the three existing disposal sites that have been shut down (in Illinois, Kentucky and New York) but gives no mention of the containment failures that caused their closures.

Health effects of ionizing radiation are presented in Unit II. While the text acknowledges that any radiation exposure may entail a slight risk, students are reassured through a variety of activity sheets that highlight natural background sources with minimal risks. ("List your favorite foods that contain potassium-40.")

Videotapes and software, free from DOE for the asking, accompany each unit. For Unit II the tape is titled "Radiation: Fact and Myth." Although not available for viewing during the teleconference, interviews that were presented leave little doubt of the intended message. Dr. Rosalyn Yalow (recipient of the 1977 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine), who has made a hobby of playing down radiation health risks, blithely states that there have been no

adverse health effects from Chernobyl, preferring to ascribe increased illness in the surrounding population to psychosomatic disorders and "vegetative dystonia."

One of the selling points for the curriculum is its interdisciplinary approach. Students exercise diverse skills including mapping, graphing, simple laboratory "experiments," calculations, etc., as applied to earth science, chemistry and social studies. Social policy issues are highlighted in Unit III, which focuses on the "democratic" process of siting the high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nev. The Teacher's Guide includes this quote from Thomas Jefferson: "I know of no safer depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves." (Was the pun accidental?)

Seeking to make the study of nuclear waste a fun experience, the curriculum intersperses enjoyable activities into the material. In Unit IV, for example, students model the difficulties of designing spent nuclear fuel shipping casks by designing and constructing, from two sheets of paper and a length of masking tape, a "cask" in which a raw egg must survive a two-meter drop. The safety of DOE transport is then underscored by viewing Sandia National Laboratory shipping cask crash-and-burn tests, a real hit with the students. One teleconference presenter shared the valuable technique of showing this video in reverse to enhance the students' enjoyment.

In its promotional materials, the DOE offers this curriculum as an example of its involvement with the America 2000 education goals, in particular goal No. 4: "By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement." The level of knowledge and understanding required by students to master the DOE syllabus is a long way from this lofty goal—just about all the skill-building activities in this curriculum are found in existing, well-developed curricula of introductory level science courses. From a pedagogical viewpoint, there is nothing unique in this DOE creation, other than an interdisciplinary approach to teaching nuclear waste issues.

As America's decision makers prepare to undertake a thorough re-evaluation of our environmental policy and global planning, parents, educators and citizens must examine the messages being targeted at our children. On the political front, the atomic power industry may well bide its time. However, its effort to prepare the next generation of Americans to accept 200 new atomic power plants by the year 2030, as envisioned by the Bush National Energy Strategy, must not be overlooked. ◀

Jim Weiss is a high school teacher of mathematics and science in Marathon, N.Y.

This article is part of a continuing series on education edited by Alex Molnar, a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The series, "Notes From the Back of the Class," covers a wide range of education-related issues. Contributions from readers are welcome. Manuscripts of no more than 1,000 words should be sent to Alex Molnar c/o In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

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IN THE ARTS

Working-class heroes

**Ken Loach's
bitterly funny
Riff-Raff looks
at blue-collar
distress in
Britain.**

By Pat Dowell

Riff-Raff is the first English movie I've ever seen that sports a complete set of subtitles for its American release. The thick, rich accents of characters drawn from all over the United Kingdom may sound a bit mysterious over here, but the situation and the politics of Ken Loach's 1990 movie, just arriving on these shores, need no translation at all.

Riff-Raff is a sardonic glimpse of working life in the rubble of urban Britain, and a celebration of the bitter humor that makes it livable. The setting is a London construction site, where a Glasgow newcomer named Stevie has signed on to help turn yet another bit of the commonwealth into private loot.

The old Prince of Wales Hospital is being gutted and remodeled into luxury flats. The men who are doing the work will never see the inside of such a dwelling unless it's to use the bathroom in the furnished

model apartment when their own marginal toilet breaks down.

Stevie fits in with his mates—Liverpudlians, West Indians, Londoners—pretty well. For one thing, like many of them, he is using an alias. He's hiding the fact that he was recently released from prison; others want to conceal their lack of documents or their meager government assistance. The boss goes along, since he can pay them lower wages and not bother with unions.

Like all of Ken Loach's movies, *Riff-Raff* is rich in such sociological detail. Informal camera work, partly improvised dialogue and a personal story sketched into a larger semi-documentary situation are all hallmarks of Loach's distinctive style. And while *Riff-Raff* isn't quite the revelation that Loach's early portraits of working-class distress were (*Poor Cow*, *Kes* and *Family Life* are the best), it amply displays his unique film sensibility and attitude toward his favorite subject. With his

patient camera, he's an unflinching but supportive observer of men and women who struggle mightily for just a little corner in English society, and who often fail unnoticed.

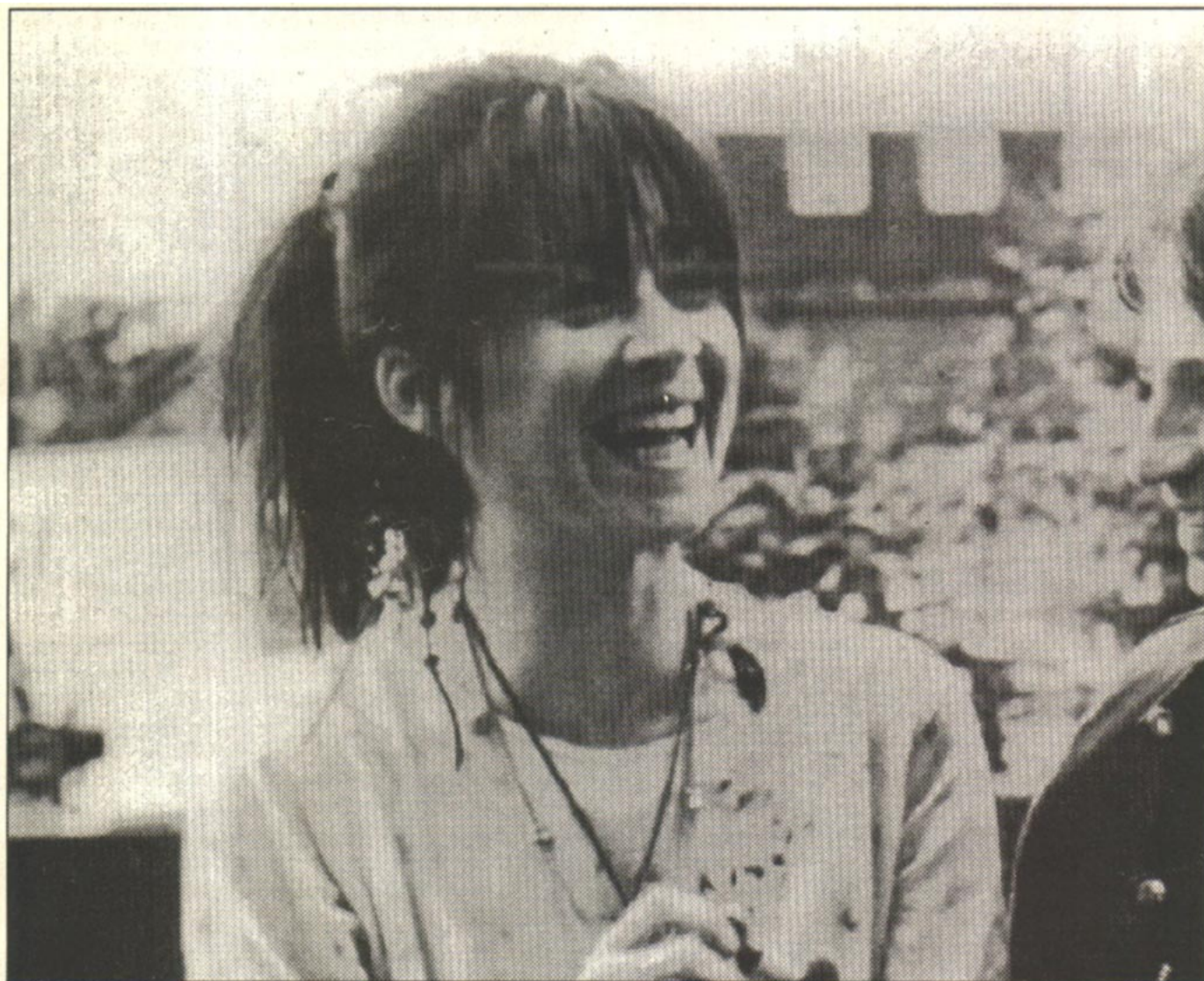
Riff-Raff is also funnier than other Loach movies; much of the script is pointedly about the camaraderie of the men. It's humor that binds them, in the jokes at the expense of their "ganger," or boss, and the pranks they play on each other. They can share a joke even after a sour argument over how much the one among them who has a bank account will charge the others to cash their paychecks.

The individual dramatic focus of the story is Stevie's attempt to make a decent life with no resources. He wants to go into business for himself, selling "boxer shorts and colored socks." He sets up housekeeping in his squatter's flat with a forlorn aspiring singer named Susan, whose interest in show business dazzles him. Susan, however, is less able to cope with life than Stevie. She can't even abide the thought that he will stay away overnight for his mother's funeral in Scotland.

Stevie's hurried trip home for that event is a quintessential Loach moment—a painfully funny and bizarre collapse of social expectations as the family squabbles over who will scatter mum's ashes. They scandalize the mortician and overlook the direction of the prevailing breeze.



Riff-Raff
Directed by Ken Loach



While Stevie's would-be happy home with Susan implodes, the dangers of Stevie's workplace, with its sub-standard safety measures and shortcuts, takes a toll as well. The story ends with some of the men taking their own futile midnight revenge on their bosses, the construction-site equivalent of torching Sal's pizza joint in *Do the Right Thing*.

Although the ending of *Riff-Raff* seems a desperate contrivance, most of the movie carries an air of authenticity, as well it might, since the director required all the actors playing construction workers to have construction-site experience. He wanted them to be physically at ease and convincing with the materials and the set, which was a real site scheduled for renovation.

It wasn't hard to find moonlighting construction workers in the acting profession; in fact, even the screenwriter, the late Bill Jesse, wrote his story on his own tea breaks in between hauling cement sacks and putting up drywall. The cast Loach recruited is led by Robert Carlyle as Stevie and Emmer McCourt as Susan, a character who is drawn a bit too schematically as a pathetic contrast to Stevie's dogged get-

up-in-the-morning-and-go character.

Yet both are convincing, as are most of the actors who play Stevie's mates on the site. A particular standout is Ricky Tomlinson, who plays Larry, a worker from Liverpool who is the only activist in the bunch. "Whenever you open your mouth," one of the others complains, "it sounds like a fuckin' parliamentary debate." It is Larry who continually reminds his pals of what Thatcherism has cost them, what the unions (which are nowhere to be seen here) have done for them.

Larry may be a nag, but he's also a genuine hero. He talks a barful of belligerent hecklers into giving tone-deaf Susan a break as a singer, and he presents the case to the boss that the scaffoldings on the work site are going to kill someone if not brought up to spec. No incident in *Riff-Raff* is more chilling, and more telling, than this one. The boss doesn't raise his voice, doesn't contradict him. He cordially thanks Larry for his suggestion and assures him the problem will be taken care of on Thursday. That's payday, and when Larry gets his check, there's a pink slip with it. Problem solved. ◀

I N P R I N T



Steve Kagan

Exhuming Izzy

By David Futrelle

Few Washington reporters have long resisted the lure of insiderhood. Journalists may profess a certain immunity to the blandishments of power, but the most honest among them acknowledge that life is easiest for those who know how to play along. "If you spend your life as a hatchet man ... then eventually you find that everybody's out to lunch when you call," former *New York Times* pundit-in-chief James Reston once told a colleague in a moment of candor. "You're left with only your own opinion. I wouldn't like that, because my own opinions aren't that good."

Though he lived in Washington most of his adult life, no one could ever accuse I.F. Stone of insiderhood. As a reporter, he never had the access granted so freely to Reston and his ilk; for him, doors in Washington were always shut, sources always out to lunch. Stone—"Izzy" to his friends and admirers—had nothing but his own opinions, and his own diligent scouring of the public record, to fall back upon. Ironically,

while the reporting of all but a handful of his colleagues has faded with the years into irrelevance, Izzy's work endures.

The collected volumes of his writings, mainly culled from his one-man newsletter *I.F. Stone's Weekly* (later, when his prodigious energy began to flag, *I.F. Stone's Biweekly*) provide a fascinating account of this nation's politics from World War II through Vietnam. They chronicle as well the complex and often contentious encounters between Izzy's stubborn iconoclasm and the accepted wisdoms of the day.

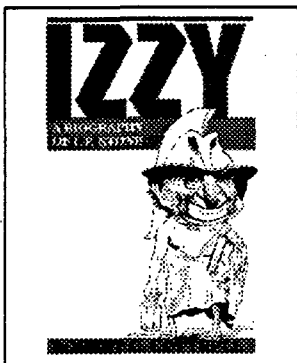
As Robert Cottrell shows in his new biography, Stone, born Isadore Feinstein in 1907, was an ideological troublemaker from the start. As a young teenager in Philadelphia in 1922, Izzy made his first foray into journalism with a small newspaper he called *The Progress*. Having scanned Izzy's crusading editorials, the paper's typesetter was convinced that the precocious editor "would come to a bad end."

By conventional standards, the typesetter's intuition proved correct. Izzy quickly moved up in the world as a journalist, becoming at the *Philadelphia Record* one of the country's youngest editorialists. But his mainstream success was destined to be temporary. Even in the '30s, when his brand of Popular Front radicalism was almost respectable, Izzy found himself at odds with his employers, forced to temper his own opinions to fit the standards of the liberal papers he wrote for, while expressing his real concerns in articles (sometimes under a pseudonym) published in the smaller radical magazines. In the worst days of what he called "the haunted '50s" Stone, who held firm to his radical beliefs, became a true pariah.

With the collapse, in the early '50s, of the short-lived left-leaning newspaper *PM* (and the even quicker collapse of its several successors), Izzy found himself, in mid-career, without a career. Determined, as he put it to a friend, to "keep on fighting if I have to crank out a paper on a mimeograph machine in the cellar," Stone launched the first issue of his four-page newsletter in 1953. With this, as Cottrell puts it, Stone began his slow transformation "from pariah to character to national institution." The *Weekly* struggled at first, but by the late '60s it finally began to attract the readership it deserved; when Izzy finally closed up shop in 1971, the paper had reached a circulation of nearly 70,000. Izzy, by this time, was a regular on the *Dick Cavett Show*.

Like the *Weekly*, Izzy's radicalism was his own creation, a peculiarly American mixture of Jefferson and Marx. Stone was nurtured in the Popular Front era of the '30s, but, ironically, it took the collapse of the organized left to clear the way for him to develop as a truly independent thinker in the '50s. In the '60s, Izzy was one of the very few of his generation who was able to connect with the emerging New Left, and to become at once both a champion and a critic of the younger radicals.

Throughout his life, Izzy was willing to take on both con-



Izzy: A Biography of

I.F. Stone

By Robert C. Cottrell

Rutgers University Press

388 pp., \$25.95

ventional and unconventional wisdom, often at the same time. Expressing his support for the Communist-backed Progressive presidential candidate Henry Wallace in 1948, Stone confessed himself to be "a [Communist] dupe, or worse, [who] ought to have [his] ideological tires checked at the nearest FBI station." But at the same time he claimed he could "pick flaws thick as flies in the Progressive party platform." Izzy defended Stalinists and Trotskyists alike when they faced government persecution, but promised that "when socialism comes I'll fight for the right to spit in the nearest bureaucrat's eye."

Izzy's critics on the right (and they were mostly on the right) always found his independence perplexing. Even after his death in 1989, McCarthyites continue to insist that his heretical opinions were bought and paid for with Moscow gold. Most recently, Izzy was charged with having been for a time a KGB agent; the charges, proffered by a former writer for the McCarthyite publication *Counterattack*, have been carefully deconstructed in the *Nation* and the *New York Review of Books*, and the former KGB officer whose offhand remarks provided the "evidence" for these charges insists that he was misunderstood. Cottrell's book, while not addressing this particular controversy, makes clear how ludicrous such charges are. Izzy didn't cut his opinions to fit anyone's ideology but his own. But in an age when our most powerful journalists are all too willing to sell their souls for Washington access, it shouldn't be too surprising that Izzy's stubbornly maintained independence would be so hard for so many to understand.

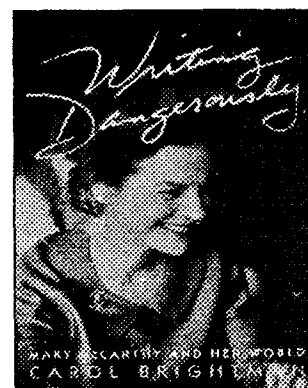
Izzy's peculiar charms have proven elusive to his biographer as well, though for different reasons. Cottrell's book never matches his subject. It's dogged, and often surprisingly dull, and does little to illuminate how Izzy's life fit into the complex history of 20th-century American radicalism—which Cottrell, focused too narrowly on his subject, doesn't seem to know much about. Those who turn to this biography without first immersing themselves in the writings of Stone himself may wonder what all the fuss is about. That would be a pity.

'and' and 'the.'" McCarthy was at her best in essays, which allowed her supremely analytical mind free rein. Her fiction, though elegantly crafted, often seems curiously abstract—she's less interested in creating believable characters than she is in making a point. Much of McCarthy's writing hovers between autobiography and fiction, and some of her work, like her *Memoires of a Catholic Girlhood*, transcends both genres, combining brilliant evocations of the past with acutely self-critical reflections on the vagaries of memory.

In the last few years of her life (she died in 1989) McCarthy picked up where her earlier memoirs had left off, taking the story up through her years among the New York Intellectuals in the late '30s. Her *Intellectual Memoirs* are "intellectual" only in the sense that nothing in her life passed by without her intense analysis. The book is a lively, if often disorganized, collection of anecdotes and asides, though it doesn't always display McCarthy's formidable talents at their best—the writing sometimes degenerates into free-association.

But it's still, well, Mary McCarthy. Recalling one particularly spirited period in her sexual life, she notes that she "was able to compare the sexual equipment of the various men I made love with, and there were amazing differences, in both length and massiveness. One handsome married man, who used to arrive with two Danishes from a very good bakery, had a penis about the size and shape of a lead pencil." McCarthy names many names in this slender book, but—mercifully!—she leaves this man nameless.

How can a biographer compete with someone who has written of her own life with such vigor? Luckily for us, Carol Brightman is herself an energetic and eloquent writer, and her massive biography is a fitting tribute to her subject. Brightman chronicles the complex trajectories of McCarthy's intertwined personal, political and artistic lives, across several continents, through four marriages (including a terrible one to Edmund Wilson) and some 20 books. It is a generally admiring work, but Brightman is not afraid to challenge McCarthy's own interpretation of events with her own—sometimes, given her subject's crafty memory, she has to. Anyone intrigued by McCarthy will surely be intrigued by this book.



Intellectual Memoirs:
New York 1936-1938
 By Mary McCarthy, with
 a foreword by Elizabeth
 Hardwick,
 Harcourt Brace
 Jovanovich, 114 pp.,
 \$15.95

Writing Dangerously:
**Mary McCarthy and Her
 World**
 By Carol Brightman,
 Clarkson Potter
 Publishers,
 714 pp., \$30

Exhuming McCarthy

By David Futrelle

Mary McCarthy wrote with a cool precision and a ferocious wit; she is remembered equally for her writing and for the controversy that so often surrounded her—like her much publicized "feud" with Lillian Hellmann, who sued McCarthy for remarking, on the *Dick Cavett Show*, that "every word she writes is a lie, including

Black power revisited

By Salim Muwakkil

The term "black power" is one of the most misunderstood terms in our cultural lexicon. It first burst into public consciousness in 1966, after Stokely Carmichael put the two words together during a civil rights march in Greenwood, Miss. With its connotation of racial violence, the term struck terror in the heart of mainstream America. And for good reason: this was also the period of the so-called "long hot summer" riots, when many Northern cities were set ablaze by enraged black residents. The explosive term and the fiery reality seemed decidedly connected.

And in one sense, the two were linked. When Carmichael uttered the fateful words, he was leading the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an affiliate of Rev. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Thus when Carmichael told those participants in the 1966 march, "We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'." What we gonna start saying now is black power," he was signaling a major conversion from King's passive resistance to a new black militance. And many of the firestarters in the cities were motivated by the same sense of frustration he evinced.

The concept of black power was much more than a frustrated call for violence. But to most Americans the term now labels an era that was characterized by an incoherent and destructive black rage; the term is often used as shorthand for one of the more ignominious excesses of the '60s. Even those seeking

phenomenon from different perspectives. Both of their volumes deeply enrich American historiography and take their place as part of what can only be called a renaissance of interest in the study of African-American history.

Black Power Ideologies utterly demolishes the popular myth that black power was a monolithic concept. McCartney, an assistant professor of government at Lafayette College, dissects the term to reveal that it consisted of three major strands: the counter-communalists, who argued for a complete restructuring of the system; the pluralists, who sought a more equitable distribution of economic and political power for African-Americans; and the separatists, who insisted that liberation for African-Americans could come only in a separate state. McCartney also contrasts black power ideologues with their integrationist antagonists, illustrating the dialectic that is so crucial to a full, contextual understanding of the movement.

While McCartney restricts his discussion of black power to the realm of political ideology, Van Deburg looks at the black power movement as a cultural as well as political phenomenon. The "movement itself," he writes, "can be conceptualized as a revolt of culture—a contemporary activist manifestation of the longstanding divergence between black and white American cultures." Because of that widened scope, *New Day in Babylon* attempts a much fuller exploration of black power's meaning.

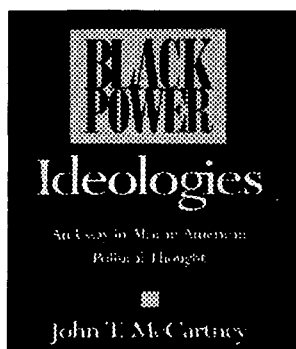
For the most part, Van Deburg, a professor of Afro-American studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, makes connections that are insightful and unexpected. For example, he includes as part of the black power phenomenon the process in which African-Americans began discarding the name "Negro" as a group designation.

"Whether one chose to use black, Afro-American, African-American, or Americans of African descent, the goal was the same—to shape a new identity through self-definition," he writes. "Placed under black control, the cultural practice of 'naming' would become a conscious political act of resistance."

Both authors write with an undertone of advocacy. McCartney believes that "a balanced and humane ethnocentrism" is a positive program, and he concludes that the black power movement—despite some excesses and mis-cues—sought to promote such a program.

Van Deburg concludes that black power's legacy is everywhere apparent. "Black power was itself an art form," he writes. "Influencing the lives and aspirations of everyday people in ways unrevealed by membership rosters and public opinion polls, black power motivated Afro-Americans of the '60s and early '70s to redefine themselves. In the process, it forced a reappraisal of American social and cultural values."

I suppose it should be mentioned here that both authors are white academics. This must be a searing irony for contemporary advocates of black power: the most definitive accounts thus far of the African-American quest for the power of definition are being written by white folks. ◀



Black Power Ideologies: An Essay in African-American Political Thought

By John T. McCartney
Temple University Press,
256 pp., \$44.95

New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975

By William L. Van Deburg
University of Chicago Press,
388 pp., \$29.95

a more scholarly illumination of the term were out of luck until late last year when two books appeared that finally submitted the concept to rigorous analysis.

Black Power Ideologies by John T. McCartney and *New Day in Babylon* by William L. Van Deburg examine the

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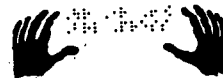
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pairs of male lovers, each comprised of an older veteran and a young recruit. As Michael Grant explained in *The Rise of the Greeks*, "there was a recognized relationship between the lover (*erastes*) and the younger loved one (*eromenos*) ... [the veteran] was held accountable for the performance ... of his loved one—a system which Xenophon described as 'the perfect form of education.'" Such an overt celebration of pederasty makes most people today want to squirm. It had a far more lethal effect on the Persians.

This was an all-homosexual army, like the equally formidable Sacred Band of Thebes. Allied during the Persian Wars with the other city state armies of ancient Greece, comprised of homosexuals, bisexuals, pederasts and lots of "straight" soldiers, these men somehow found enough "bonding and fighting spirit" to produce, not Vietnam, but Marathon (490 B.C.), Thermopylae, Artemisium and Salamis (480 B.C.), and Plataea and Mycale (479 B.C.). During the succeeding Peloponnesian Wars—immortalized by Thucydides—Sparta and Thebes beat up the rest of the Greeks. After them came Alexander, who beat up the rest of the world.

Alexander was almost certainly bisexual.

No, we don't live in ancient times and do battle with ancient tactics. But the ancient love of intolerance that seeds all war sure is alive and well in the American military establishment. Even as the much-publicized sexual harassment and assault of female soldiers is officially deplored as dishonorable and even felonious misogyny, homophobia is officially sanctioned. Even as the debate about women soldiers turns on their physical capacity for close combat, homosexuals—a group that has demonstrated that capacity over thousands of years—are routinely drummed out of the service.

I happen to be heterosexual. I suppose my sexual orientation would have gotten me kicked out of history's two toughest outfits. Some retired Spartan or Theban colonel would have denounced me with Hackworthian bombast. As he babbled on about heterosexuals destroying the "bonding and fighting spirit" of his precious all-gay army, I'm sure I would have thought him a perfect fool.

I still do.

Travis Charbeneau is a regular contributor to *In These Times*.

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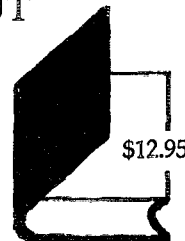
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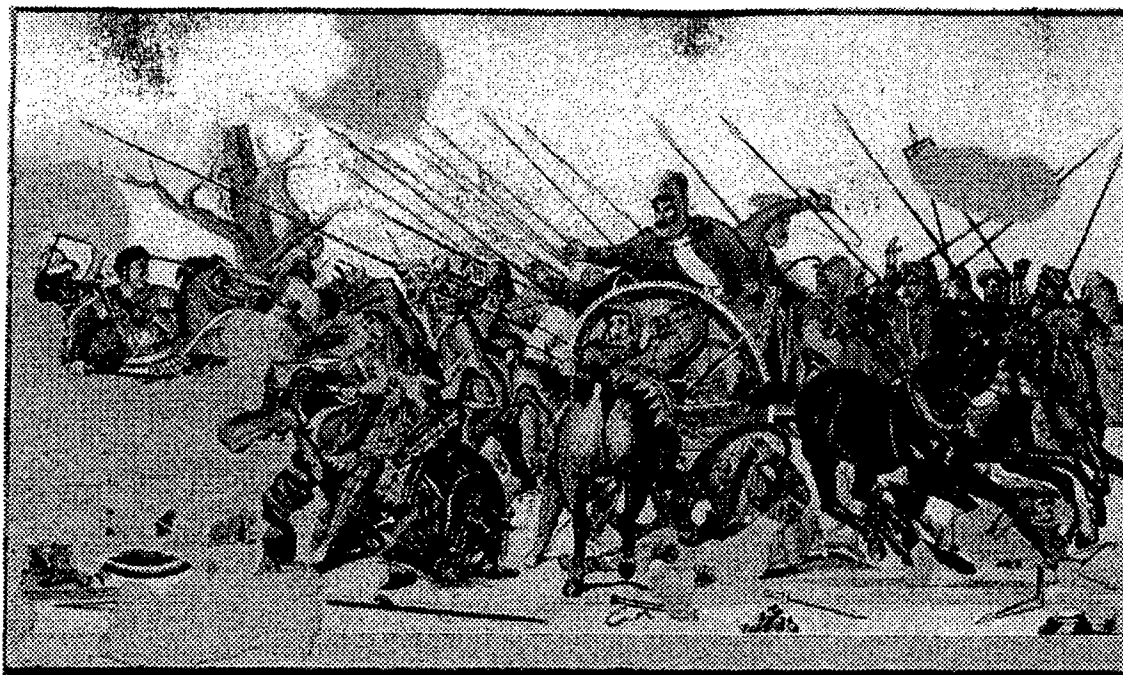
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IN THE END

Brothers in (each other's) arms

By Travis Charbeneau



Retired Army Col. David H. Hackworth, a contributing editor for *Newsweek*, has often summed up the military's core complaint about gays in uniform. On CNN's *Crossfire* several months back, Hackworth told viewers that the presence of what he called "devious" homosexuals destroys the "bonding and fighting spirit" needed to win battles. He said this spirit was missing in Vietnam, implying that "devious" gays

somehow avoided World War II but flocked to Vietnam to ensure American defeat.

Such notions, however, fly in the face of military history.

For nearly 2,000 years, until Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus developed the tactics of musketry in the 17th century, battles were decided by the classical phalanx, perfected by Alexander the Great in the 4th century B.C. This was *man's* fighting.

Terrain and maneuver were almost irrelevant.

Two enemy lines of dense formations would close slowly, often to the rhythm of flutes or drums to keep them in step. When the opposing ranks collided, the "push of pike" (a 16-foot spear) and thrusting with short swords would begin. As men were killed, the line was filled from behind or closed from the side, but eventually a gap would open, and one side would make a big push.

In his book *War*, military historian Gwynne Dyer describes the typical engagement: "The enemy's formation would crumble, men would turn to flee, and the massacre would begin. The losers would typically suffer casualties of half their force or more—almost all of them killed, for no quarter was given."

Edged weapons performed true "butchery," not its more efficient and humane modern metaphor. Hacked-off body parts were not reattached under general anesthesia on air-conditioned hospital ships. During the battle, artillery, naval and air support were not squawking for coordinates over satellites and radio.

Who were these tough, testosterone-pumped grunts who fought such bodacious battles at such close quarters? The phalanx first appeared around 700 B.C., but all agree that none managed it better than the 5th century B.C. Spartans, synonymous to this day with macho extremo. During the Persian Wars, the Spartans anticipated Plato's advice that the most formidable army in the world would consist of

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